

**ADDRESS TO PARENTS' FORUM BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, CALEB UNIVERSITY, IMOTA, LAGOS STATE  
ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2011.**

Dear Parents,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the second Parents' Forum of Caleb University and the first at the permanent site. It is also the first since I assumed duty as Vice-Chancellor on October 18, 2010. I rejoice with everyone on this occasion and thank God Almighty for sparing our lives to witness another day, event and year. Thank you for your interest in our students and this University:

**The Journey So Far**

As we all know, Caleb University commenced lectures at the take-off site at Magodo, Lagos on January 21, 2008 (after the formal opening on January 7, 2008) and moved to the permanent site here on 23 November 2009. So far, we have completed three uninterrupted academic sessions and our student population has risen to just over 900. I am most delighted to report that all of our fourteen degree programmes scaled through accreditation by the NUC. Unlike several others, we had no single denied accreditation as can be seen in the NUC publication in *The Guardian* newspaper of Friday, October 8, 2010, pages 46 and 47. For this achievement, I thank Almighty God and pay special tribute to the Proprietor and Chancellor, Prince Ola Adebogun, the Chairman 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. I am confident that we shall attain greater heights working together.

The University has made strides in other spheres. We have state-of-the-art laboratories, radio, television and architecture studios. Our professional courses have also received the due endorsement of relevant professional bodies. In the closing months of 2010, we played host to the ARCON/NUC Team and the NUC Resource Verification Team for Mass Communication, while the President of ICAN, Major-General Sebastian Onwuama (Ret.) led a powerful team of national officers to Caleb University. These bodies have commended our facilities and staffing. Indeed, we are currently processing an application for a radio licence for our Mass Communication programme just as we are about commencing the construction of the purpose-built Professor Idowu Sobowale International School of Mass Communication. The aim of the Mass Communication School is to produce highly competitive professionals and to be the dominant centre of postgraduate studies in the country. We are commencing degree programmes in Political Science, Philosophy and International Relations, as a

prelude to the take-off of our College of Law. In all fields, we have continued to strengthen our teaching staff through an aggressive recruitment drive across and beyond Nigeria. Meanwhile, we have commissioned an expert to design our purpose-built sports complex, the architectural drawings of which are due in three weeks. From January 2011, we are placing our staff on the Federal Government pay scale though this is saddling us with a heavy deficit. We intend to reduce this deficit by boosting our internally generated revenue as a complement to tuition fees. Hence, we can assure our parents that there will be no increase of fees now and in the immediate future.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

As in any other sphere of life, we have faced challenges. As I alluded above, our decision to comply with national University wage levels has inflicted a heavy deficit on us. At the same time, we are compelled to recruit more staff, expand teaching and other facilities, ensure regular power supply through the acquisition and running of diesel-powered generators, and expand hostel facilities to accommodate the increase in enrolment. We also have to provide campus accommodation to meet the demand of high-calibre staff that we are head-hunting.

However, we have decided to see opportunities in our challenges. This has led us to begin to initiate our own income-generating ventures, launch pre-degree/certificate programmes and solicit for external assistance from friends of the University. We also 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 Events**

Before I conclude this address, permit me to highlight a few forthcoming events. First, our second Foundation Day Lecture will hold on January 21, 2011. The speaker is Professor J.K. Olupona, NNOM of Harvard University. The event will be chaired by our Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council; Professor Nimbe Adedipe while the Special Guest of Honour and Guest of Honour are The Honourable Minister of Sports and Special Duties; Professor Taoheed Adedoja and Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa, respectively. Second, a Distinguished Guest Lecture to be delivered by a State Governor is slated for March 2011. Third, like other Nigerian Universities, we are due for Institutional Accreditation this year. This is for the ranking of all Universities. We are getting set for it and hope to be among the top-ranking institutions in the country. Hence, we are fully focused on staff recruitment, infrastructure development and overall capacity building; and solicit your support for greater success.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, I thank you once again for sparing time to be here and await your feedback on this presentation. I look forward to a frank and fair discussion of any of the aforementioned and other issues in a cordial atmosphere. At the end of the deliberations, I invite you to undertake a facility tour of the campus and to ask questions on any matter of interest. The ongoing Exhibition by the College of Environmental Management and Sciences, the laboratories of the College of Pure and Applied Sciences, and the radio and television studios of the College of Social and Management Sciences are open to you.

Welcome to Caleb University: by the grace of God, "we are well able"!

Thank you for listening and safe journey to your respective destinations. God bless.

**Professor Ayodeji O. OLUKOJU**

**Vice-Chancellor**