



Redeemer's University

Ede, Osun State

Vice-Chancellor's Speech Delivered at the Sixth (6th) Convocation of the Redeemer's University on Thursday 8th January, 2015, University Auditorium, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria
The God of Grace and Glory

Protocols

Warm Welcome

It is my delight to welcome everyone to the sixth Convocation of the Redeemer's University, Ede. The last time we had an occasion like this was on our temporary site at the Redemption Camp, Ogun State. Redeemer's University is celebrating her sixth convocation ceremonies which mark another milestone in sending forth an army of young graduands to change the world. The legacy and vision of our founding father, Pastor Enoch Adejare Adebayo, to raise an army of professionals to transform the world for Christ is getting bigger and better in scope. We are also celebrating our successful relocation to our permanent site after nine (9) years of sojourning at a temporary site. Also, our University has continued to record strategic feats to the glory of God.

Appreciations

First and foremost, our utmost appreciation goes to the Most High God, the Great Redeemer of mankind and the incomparable Redeemer of Redeemer's University. **Our Redeemer has been strong; the Lord of Hosts is His name. He has been the Shield for us; our Glory and the lifter up of our heads. He gives Grace and Glory and He has never spared any good thing deemed appropriate for us. (Jer. 50:34, Psa. 3:3, Psa. 84:11). He is the God of new things (Isa. 43:19).** He promised to do new things and has been fulfilling His promises. For us, the last one year has been a bountiful one decorated with God's grace and glory, mercy and extra-ordinary favour of God. The Redeemer has continued to surprise us beyond our wildest imagination through unspeakable supernatural assistance and interventions received by the University both from within and outside.

Secondly, we greatly appreciate the indescribable Gift of God to the University, the Visitor and the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Pastor Enoch Adejare Adebayo for his generous provisions to the University. Also, the unique contributions and support of our beloved *Mother-In-Israel*, Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adebayo are unquantifiable. Sir and Ma, only the Redeemer himself can appreciate and compensate you for your extraordinary passion, commitment and sacrifices for the University. The truth is that no University is so richly endowed with devoted parents as ours!

Relocation to Permanent Site

Indeed, it is a great delight that the Redeemer's University has finally relocated to its permanent site. This was achieved against all odds and daunting challenges. It was a journey of faith. The movement was made possible by the grace of God and rugged determination to actualize the fulfilment of the dream of many years. It is noteworthy that our academic sessions have continued to run smoothly in spite of the recent relocation. We are happy to inform our stakeholders that our relocation has become a major watershed. A major watershed in the sense that we can now as a citadel of learning begin to expand our programmes and lay the foundation for what will become a success story in the history of private universities in Africa.

We are also thankful to our former community in the Redemption Camp. The supporting roles of our Senior Pastors in the Mission have been a great encouragement and are greatly acknowledged. The community at Ede has played pivotal roles in the realisation of our long time aspirations. We are therefore most grateful to the Timi of Ede, Oba Munirudeen Adesola Lawal (Laminisa I) and his chiefs for their exceptional supports. The support provided by the Redeemed Christian School of Missions (RECSOM), Ede has been beyond the ordinary. We are most thankful to the Principal, Pastor Joel Oke. The RCCG Project Office, ably headed by Pastor Peter Adeyemi (Daddy Mate) has played pivotal roles in our success story. We are grateful Sir! We are grateful to everyone, both Christian and Moslem communities in Ede, who have contributed in one way or the other to ensure our sustained progress. Your efforts have encouraged and strengthened our resolve to make this a prestigious University, one of the best

Universities in the world. Our University has begun a journey to greatness and I will like to salute men and women who have excelled in supporting this great vision.

Highlights of this Convocation

At this convocation, we are launching 598 graduands into the world. These graduands have been groomed and certified fit to take Nigeria and other nations to the next level. We have 28 graduands who made First Class (4.7%), 201 graduands on Second Class Upper Division (33.6%) while 266 are graduating with Second Class Lower Division (44.5%). Some 103 graduands fall into other categories (17.2%). These graduands took the oath of matriculation in October, 2010.

S/N	College	First Class	2nd Class (Upper)	2nd Class (Lower)	3rd Class	Pass	Total
1	Humanities	2	41	65	17	-	125
2	Management Sciences	15	121	152	58	8	354
3	Natural Sciences	11	39	49	20	-	119
	Total	28	201	266	95	8	598

The best graduating student this year is again, a very strong representative of the ladies. MISS BELLO, IBUKUNOLUWA BUSAYO in the Sociology programme with a CGPA of 4.93 is the overall best graduating student. The University gladly offers full scholarship for her postgraduate programme as a worthy Ambassador of the Class of Glory.

For this graduating class, of the 28 first class graduands, 20 are girls leaving a paltry slot of 8 for the boys. This translates to 71% for the ladies and 29% for the gents. For the second class upper division, girls are even stronger with 74% representation whereas, boys dominate the lower levels.

In fact, our records show that so far, for all the six graduation ceremonies (2009/2010 – 2013/2014), ladies have the largest share of first class graduates (70%) while the men share just a fraction (30%). So far, 5 ladies clinched the top slots and only one man was able to appear at the much coveted spot. It is also noteworthy that female students actually dominate all the upper level classes, whereas, male students rule the lowest levels (third class and pass degrees).

This set is made up of talented, innovative, obedient, passionate and godly individuals. They are a special breed of great Ambassadors. Accordingly, we have christened them, the **Class of Glory!** This is in the celebration of the special class and the successful movement to our permanent site.

In addition, the University is presenting its first set of postgraduate students for the award of Master of Science degree in Managerial Psychology (11); Master of Arts degree in English (2); Theatre Arts (2); and History & International Relations (1). In all, sixteen (16) postgraduate students are being awarded higher degrees of the University.

Recovery of Destiny Programme

Few years ago, we started our *Recovery of Destiny* (ROD) programme as a window of opportunity to student offenders who after expulsion, are ready to undergo a transformational programme in partnership with two visionary non-governmental organisations and wish to come

back to the University if successful. A number of parents and guardians supported this initiative wholeheartedly. We are gladdened by the stories and testimonies we have received from these transformed students and their parents. Today, the first set of these transformed students (seven in number), and the second set (two in number) are graduating. We also use this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to the building of not just the intellect of our students, but their character and indeed, their spirits as well.

Our Modest Achievements

In the past one year, Redeemer's University gracefully emerged as the highest rated University from amongst 15 highly rated and prestigious Universities from West and Central Africa selected through a rigorous and transparent exercise for the establishment of African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases, being funded by the World Bank.

This feat has brought to the fore the aspiration of the founding fathers of the Redeemer's University to build a university that will be renowned for global excellence. According to the Association of African Universities (AAU), the choice of ACEGID was based on the positive recommendations of international experts in the field after a transparent and rigorous evaluation exercise of all the 52 proposals that were submitted by various universities in Africa to the continental body.

ACEGID will not only support science in Africa, but also have wide ranging impacts on public health in the continent. By building capacity for state-of-the-art genome sequencing and field-deployable genetic tools for microbial infection in Africa, ACEGID will support clinical care of the most devastating diseases and enable a surveillance network for some of the world's greatest global health threats. Overall, the establishment of ACEGID at Redeemer's University will not only bring academic and research success for African science, but also contribute in fundamental ways to continental health and economic development.

I am happy to report that since early 2014, ACEGID has been thrown into the limelight, especially with the involvement of the Centre in the confirmation of the first Ebola cases in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Research and academic activities at ACEGID have been very busy and below are some of them:

- ACEGID Laboratories in Sierra Leone and Nigeria confirmed the first cases of Ebola Virus Diseases in both countries.
- The Director of ACEGID and other researchers/academics associated with the Centre have given numerous interviews in Local (Nigerian and Sierra-Leonian) and international media houses: In Nigeria (Punch, the Guardian, BCOS, FM 105.5 Ibadan, Channels TV, and many online news outlets). On the international Scene, the media houses are (The New York Times, BBC World North America, BBC World UK, Radio Seoul, South-Korea, WHO/TDR News).
- ACEGID Scientists have published many research articles on Ebola and related infectious diseases journals with the highest impact factors namely, Science Magazine (Impact factor 44; 2 papers published); Nature (Impact factor 48; ACEGID is the featured

of one article); New England Journal of Medicine (Impact factor 52.8; 1 paper published); Genome Biology (Impact factor 11; 2 papers published); Viruses (Impact factor 4.5; 2 papers published).

- ACEGID Scientists successfully sequenced the Ebola virus from Sierra Leone and provided the scientific community with the so much needed information necessary for drug, vaccine and diagnostics development.
- ACEGID Scientists and researchers together with prominent Nollywood artists/actors undertook an Ebola outreach campaign (Lens on Ebola) and produced three videos on Ebola symptoms, awareness and prevention that has been used and translated by the Nigerian Government in many local languages for Ebola outreach throughout the country.
- ACEGID received \$1,000,000.00 (One million Dollars donation in Equipment by Illumina and USAID).
- ACEGID signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BioInnovation, a Lausanne, Switzerland Company for capacity building/student training and technological development for infectious diseases diagnosis.
- ACEGID and BioInnovation have developed a Rapid Response Diagnostics Test that can detect the Ebola virus with 15 minutes. An official announcement for this new development would be made later. ACEGID is to receive 5% royalties on total sales of this new Ebola Diagnostics Kit worldwide.
- ACEGID has been recommended by a Wellcome Trust Review Committee to submit a full proposal for the establishment of a Capacity Building and Leadership Development for Excellence in Genomics of Infectious Diseases (CABLED for EXGID) programme after submitting a letter of intent for a competitive call.
- The World Bank is planning to provide additional support to ACEGID in Support of Ebola activities.
- ACEGID and Redeemer's University websites have seen a very sharp surge in the number of people visiting the Websites.
- ACEGID has continued to make impact both locally and internationally. As a mark of the importance of our ACEGID Centre, the Nigerian Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy at an international forum in Washington DC, USA acknowledged the support the University has provided the Federal Government in the containment of the disease in Nigeria. Indeed, the story of the containment of the disease in Nigeria would not be complete without mentioning the Redeemer's University. Only two laboratories are recognised in Nigeria for the accurate diagnosis of the Ebola virus by the American Centres for Disease Control (CDC) of which ours is one of such.
- As a mark of the strategic role ACEGID is playing in the EVD control, the United Nations Development Programme recently commissioned a rapid assessment survey on Ebola containment success factors in Nigeria and our ACEGID Director was consulted in recognition of the key role ACEGID played during the containment of the EVD.
- Presently, the ACEGID team is not only the toast but the pacesetter and the cynosure of the other African Centres of Excellence.

In the same vein, Redeemer's University recently won a \$1.54million research grant over the next four years to support research and training of Africans in the field of genomics and building scientific infrastructure under the Human, Hereditary and Health in Africa (H3Africa) Programme which is funded by a partnership between the United States National Institutes of Health and the United Kingdom's Wellcome Trust.

Furthermore, I am glad to report that the University won another academic award. Our Environmental and Chemical Processes Research Group in the Department of Chemical Sciences led by Dr Emmanuel Unuabonah won an award at the 2014 Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE) Global Awards held in Cheltenham, United Kingdom on 6th November, 2014. The team was awarded the 2014 IChemE Award for Innovation and Excellence in the category of the 'Dhirubhai Ambani Chemical Engineering Innovation for Resource-Poor People Award' for their 'Clay-papaya combo adsorbent for water treatment' project. The award includes a US\$10,000 prize to help further the reach and development of the winning project. This year's award shortlist included over 70 entries in 15 categories from China, Malaysia, India, Italy, Egypt, Australia, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and Nigeria.

ACCREDITATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

The National Universities Commission (NUC) paid a Resource Verification visit to the University and assessed the following postgraduate programmes for take-off:

1. Master of Business Administration (MBA)
2. MSc Statistics
3. MSc Biochemistry
4. MSc Material Chemistry
5. MSc Environmental and Analytical Chemistry

The five programmes were approved by NUC for take-off in the current 2014/2015 academic session.

In addition, the University obtained professional accreditation for some of its programmes as follows:

- The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) visited and accredited the B.Sc Banking and Finance programme of the University. In addition, the Institute signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University which enables B.Sc. Banking & Finance graduates of the University additional exemption from CIBN Professional Examination. Redeemer's University B.Sc. Banking and Finance graduates will only write 5 subjects to qualify as an Associate Member of CIBN instead of 10 subjects applicable to other non accredited Higher Institutions.
- The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) visited the Department of Transport and Tourism Studies of the University and accredited B.Sc Tourism Studies and B.Sc Transport and Logistics Management
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) accredited the B.Sc Accounting Programme in the Department of Financial Studies of the University.

Investments in IT

In line with our resolve to use Information and Communication Technology systems as the virtual gateway and operations of this University, we have used the opportunity of our relocation to invest massively on our IT system.

(i) E-Platforms

The University has deployed a robust Local Area Network (LAN) spanning across the academic area and a fiber cabling running down from the academic area to the student hostels and the residential staff quarters. Our internet connectivity is a 50Mbps sized bandwidth on the network that would allow for all our processes to be done online, including delivery of lectures, video-conferencing and so on. We have installed access point radios to provide wireless service at the academic area and this is being extended to the residential areas.

(ii) E-Learning

In line with our IT-driven initiatives and our collective vision to make ICT integral to learning and the creation of skilled, creative and active learning environments, the University has invested heavily in and deployed infrastructure for an e-Learning platform via the Samsung Smart School and Content Management Solution. It is the first of its type in Nigeria. In this regard, Electronic Interactive Boards have been installed in all our Lecture rooms and theatres for learning purposes. The technology has a very high resolution, very clear and sharp images not affected by shadow. The device does not produce rays injurious to health and does not emit heat unlike conventional interactive boards. It is Wi-Fi based and has local area network (LAN) port for connection to the internet. The device has a software module that allows connectivity to students' devices. By this, the lecturer can monitor what the students are doing while in class and thereby control what they are able to do during the time. Furthermore, the e-Board can perform any function that a typical computer will do, including access to the internet and installation of programmes. It is touch-screen and so gives real-life feel and experience. Since most of our Lecturers already have mobile devices which can be synchronized with the new system and the lecturer is ready to deliver his lecture on this platform within a minute of getting to the classroom.

(iii) Acquisition of Modern Computers

The University has just acquired 600 All-in-One computers and 100 laptops of the highest quality. These are aimed at enhancing our academic and administrative operations

(iv) Other IT Solutions

The recruitment portal was introduced to improve the recruitment exercise. This portal basically serves as first hand test of IT skills of each applicant during the application process. In addition, the annual staff appraisal exercise has been automated for the assessment of staff performance, thereby eliminating the manual process of doing this.

In order to streamline support requests/enquiries and better serve students and staff, we deployed a support ticket system. On the system, support request is assigned a unique ticket number which can be used to track the progress and responses online.

The online pre-registration screening exercise of our fresh students was introduced for their convenience at the commencement of the session 2014/2015 in the comfort of their home before resuming on campus for the academic programmes.

The automation of other manual processes done by the University is currently in progress and we hope to commence with the next phase of automation this year, including Leave Application, Job Requisitions, Financial Applications, Full online payment application for staff; and Students' Exeat System.

It is my delight to place on record that our loving and caring parents, through the University Family Forum (RUNFF), have been partnering with us for our sustained progress. We are equally grateful to the Redeemer's University Women Association (RUNWA) for their consistent support and mentoring of our students.

Concluding Remarks

To our graduating students whom I fondly call the *Class of Glory*, we heartily congratulate you and your parents on the successful completion of your programme here in spite of the rigours of the system. For you, the journey has just begun but you are the unstoppable generation. Through you, God will do new things (Isa. 43:19). You are to set the pace in good works wherever you find yourself. You are to shine as lighthouses in a crooked and perverse generation. As representatives of the Class of Glory, you must represent the Lord commendably in your entire endeavour. I decree that as you do this, you are unstoppable by the gates of hell!

Let me reiterate the fact that Redeemer's University was borne out of prophecy. It is a University made in Heaven. It is therefore a project in the hands of God. God's project can only prosper. Every one of us must give our God-given resources, both tangible and intangible, to make her realise the purpose for which it was established. Our commitment is to raise leaders who will redefine standards and transform the world. We are called to build not just structures, but lives! In spite of the teething challenges of moving into a new environment, I see our University as a child of destiny; I see our new campus as a covenant child, with a potential to become the strongest and the best. Join me in seeing the glory ahead. Join us in nurturing this baby to its predestined greatness. We will set the pace for others!

In the words of Nehemiah, this is my appeal to all and sundry:

"Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem (Redeemer's University) ... Let us rise up and build. So they (all stakeholders) strengthened their hands for this good work. ...The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build" (Neh. 2:17-20).

The Visitor, the Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to thank you for your kind attention.

Professor Z. Debo Adeyewa

Vice-Chancellor

Thursday, 8th January, 2014