

**THE ADDRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN,  
HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. DR. JACKSON OLE SAPIT,  
AT THE 27TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY,  
ON FRIDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2018**

The Guest of honor and the University Chancellor, **HON. PROF. MARGARET KOBIA,**  
CABINET SECRETARY FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE, YOUTH AND GENDER AFFAIRS.

The Chancellor Emeritus, **Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia,**

Members of the University Governing Council and the Board of Trustees,

The Vice-Chancellor, **Prof. Joseph Galgalo,**

The Board of Management and Senate,

Invited Guests,

Faculty Members,

Staff, Parents, Guardians,

Distinguished Graduands,

Students and friends of St. Paul's University,

On behalf of the University Council I warmly welcome you all to the **27<sup>th</sup> Graduation ceremony of St. Paul's University**. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the just installed University Chancellor Hon. Prof. Margaret Kobia for her appointment and installation as the second Chancellor of St. Paul's University. Hon. Chancellor, your services will be invaluable to us. We look forward to your service with us as we work together for the progress of this great university, and together, take it to even greater heights.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate the outgoing Chancellor Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia. We applaud you for a commendable service over the last 10 years as the very first, inaugural Chancellor of this university. You have distinguished yourself, and set very high standard on which we shall continue to build. It has been a pleasure working with chancellor Kobia, and we invite him to continue working with us in the role of chancellor-emeritus, for we would not like to miss out on his enormous contribution.

Our graduands are the reason for this great celebration. Congratulations to you, the graduating class of 2018!

This is my third year to preside over the university in my capacity as the chair of the Council. I thank the Council for the growth that we have continued to realize. My association with this University goes way back to a time long before I become the council chair. I am an alumnus of this university and can attest to the great strides that this university has made over the years. From a small institution of only 111 students during my time to a world renown university that St. Paul's has become over time. Today we have a student population of just over 6000 pursuing studies in various disciplines. Our academic program stands at a total of 67 including non-degree programs. We have recently rolled out PhD level studies in three key areas including Development Studies, Business and Theology. We are also set to roll out programs in health sciences, preparing to begin with clinical medicine and nursing, which are now at various stages of approval, as we prepare the necessary facilities, and put together required resources. In all we do, we shall always emphasize relevance and quality, as we continue to support our reputation as an institution of excellence.

*Ladies and gentlemen*, I thank God for His faithfulness. God has given us a team characterized by wisdom, commitment and determination. I take this opportunity once again to thank our council members and the chancellor. Thank you for your diligent leadership, support and the spirit of service. Under your charge, I believe St. Paul's is headed for 'greater heights' as the university anthem goes.

### **Our Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are in an era of innovative development in the country and the University Council will strive to support the University to continue to grow. This year's graduation theme, encapsulates our aspiration: "*Nurturing Leaders with Relevant Competencies for Industrialization and Sustainable Development.*" We reiterate our commitment to produce leaders of integrity and with relevant competences to contribute to human progress. St. Paul's University has over the years built a global reputation. Our alumni have gone on to shape development trends, lead industries, churches and occupy prominent places of responsibility in society. We shall leverage on our strengths and continually reinvigorate the delivery of our academic programs, by supporting a strong faculty team and promoting research and innovation. We have set a good track record, and I am confident of greater growth and a brighter future.

Quality education requires quality human resource, quality infrastructure and facilities, quality research, and support systems. Last year we opened a modern dining facility with an impressive ambiance commensurate with our standards. We also constructed a modern anatomy laboratory, in readiness for our planned programs in Health Sciences. Last month, we also opened another three-storey building, which will serve as a conference center to support our programs in life-long and skill-based training programs. We shall continue supporting the management to increase the students, faculty and facilities to facilitate world class learning. We shall continue to support the senate to expand the courses we offer, to equip our graduates with skills relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and to promote research, in order to address the challenges facing our society.

As I said early, our graduands are the reason for our celebration today. God made this day possible, and we give him all honour and glory. I also congratulate the graduands, for their hard work and success.

Generally speaking, this great achievement, has not come easy. However long, hard, or tasking the journey may have been, your hard work, determination and focus has paid off. Well done! This, I think, needs to be emphasized a little more, because successfully completing a course of study is not a mean feat. You braved the cold of Limuru, survived the rigor of continuous assessment, the examination itself, managed to submit those assignments on time, met the minimum 75% class attendance rule, and here you are – ready, deserving, and qualified to receive the academic reward you worked for. Let us appreciate you – please give the graduands a round of applause.

Just a word of advice. Dear graduands – go out knowing that sometimes, life doesn't follow the plans you lay out for yourself. Anticipate some highs and lows of life, the difficult and the easy. You may face difficulties and all may not be a smooth sailing. Remember, true success will be defined by how you handle these times – and especially, on how you creatively apply your knowledge and skills to create opportunities, even where none may seem available. The world may not know or appreciate what you have – show them what you've got. And never lose the confidence that with the training you have received, you actually have what it takes to make a meaningful contribution to any society.

By studying with us, you have already taken the initiative to build a promising future. Every class you have taken, every essay written, and every certification you have earned, are preparations to help you adapt to change, face challenges, think critically and creatively and solve problems. If classes were tough, I assure you that the world out there is tougher. You are, nevertheless, equipped to tackle it. You are now armed with one of the most important tools needed to enable you forge ahead in life: your education! Do not just follow the crowd, or simply try and do things as everybody does – dare go where others have not gone, and do things in fresh and new ways, and make your education count.

Finally, as I end my remarks, please put your trust in God your creator – God who knew you from before you were born. He has good plans for your life, if you let him lead you (Jer. 29:11). Seek not just success, but virtue in all you do. Kenya needs values-guided leadership, and we count on you to serve with a difference, and change the sick mentality which thinks that, 'to gain power, wealth, success, or even to get into employment, one must bow to gods of corruption. Resist and make a difference.

To all who supported our graduands in whichever way - faculty members, families, sponsors, mentors, guardians, friends, THANK YOU! As those who are finishing today take time to find their space, and commit themselves to offering quality service, in keeping with their training, please give them a chance, and kindly receive what they are able to offer.

Thank you, and God bless you all.