Vice-Chancellor's Speech

Rev. Canon Prof. James Kombo

SPEECH BY REV. CANON PROF. JAMES KOMBO, THE ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY VICE CHANCELLOR DURING THE 33RD GRADUATION CEREMONY HELD ON FRIDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE IN LIMURU MAIN CAMPUS.

- **The Chief Guest and Chancellor of St. Paul's University Hon. Prof. Margaret Kobia, EGH,**
- **The Guest Speaker, Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, General Secretary, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC),**
- **The Council Chair, His Grace The Most Rev. Dr. Jackson Ole Sapit and members of the University Council,**
- **The Chair of the Board of Trustees The Rt. Rev. Dr. Thegu Mutahi and members of the Board of Trustees,**
- **Members of the Board of Management and Senate,**
- **All national government officials and county leaders present,**
- **Members of faculty and staff,**
- **Parents, guardians and sponsors,**
- **Distinguished Guests,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Hamjambo…

Graduations are colorful events that dignify efforts put forth by students during their period of study and rubberstamps their academic accolades. Based on this premise, I wish to extend my hearty congratulations to the graduating class of 2024 for your well deserving achievement. I am proud that you have been able to complete your studies with a resounding measure of success. Indeed, we give all the glory and honor to God because through him, He has walked with each one of us from the first day we were ushered into the gates of St. Paul's until today when we are reaping the fruits of our labor.

I am also filled with gratitude because I am privy to the fact that the caliber of graduates we are producing at St. Paul's University is topnotch by all standards and have all it takes to contribute towards the growth and prosperity of our nation. I have no iota of doubt they have been equipped to become problem solvers, change makers and innovators in their various fields of study.

As we celebrate our 33rd graduation ceremony today, I know it has taken unimaginable sacrifices from our graduands, parents, guardians, faculty and all our partners who have ensured we achieve this magnitude of

success. And like the scripture says in Psalms 118: 24, indeed this is the day the Lord has made; Let us all rejoice and be glad in it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I also wish to extend my deep gratitude to our Chancellor Hon. Prof. Margaret Kobia, who has walked with us every step of our journey. Her contributions have been instrumental in ensuring we achieve great milestone as a university. I am always inspired with her commitment, passion and drive to take the university to greater heights. Madam Chancellor, I am sincerely grateful for your service and leadership.

To our Council Chair Rev. Dr. Jackson Ole Sapit, your service at St. Paul's University is more of a calling than a duty. Your incredible visionary leadership and counsel is what have catapulted our university to become the best private chartered ecumenical university in the region. We are indebted to you. I also wish to appreciate the contribution of our board of trustees led by The Rt. Rev. Dr. Thegu Mutahi in ensuring that our university remains steadfast as a beacon of transformation and impact in the society.

My special gratitude also goes to our guest speaker for today Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki, a man of immense treasure in the body of Christ and in Christian ministry. In your service to the church, we have hopes for the coming generation.

Graduands,

I have a lot to say to appreciate the kind of support you have bestowed on us to ensure we deliver what we have been called to do and rightly speaking, today is just one of those occasions where we are able to reap the fruits of our partnership. I am assured the university has equipped and prepared you to conquer the world with knowledge and inspire the world with the values instilled in you for the years of study you have had at St. Paul's University. For lack of better words, let me state that it is your time to go out there and shine.

Madam Chancellor,

As we celebrate our 33rd graduation ceremony, I wish to bring to your attention a number of successes we have been able to achieve in the past one year. I am glad to report that our vision and aspiration to establish centre's of training in craft and artisan courses was successful. The St. Paul's University TVET was accredited and certified by TVETA to roll our various diploma and certificate programmes in our Nairobi and Nakuru campuses. Plans are underway to also establish the centre in our Limuru campus and in this way avail opportunities to many young people to enroll with us and sharpen their skills in various areas of specializations. In addition, our Virtual campus was also fully accredited by the Commission for University Education. This is another milestone that makes us proud as a university taking into consideration very few universities have been accredited to offer online courses.

Recently, we have embarked on a series of renovations and upgrades on our infrastructure and learning facilities to ensure it meets the standards we have always desired to reach. I am sure with such efforts; we will have conducive learning environment that will spur academic excellence.

Further, Madam Chancellor, I would like to inform you that our resolve towards preparing our students for global service is on high gear. Through our partnership and collaboration office, we have been able to organize academic trips outside Kenya for our students to get exposure to different cultures, experiences and be in the know of innovations that are shaping the technological revolution in the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I reflect on this year's graduation theme, "**Establishing the nexus of faith, science and technology for global transformation**," a number of things come to my mind. First of all, we note that science contributes immensely to new knowledge which serves as a direct source of ideas for new technological possibilities. The theme also expounds on the interrelationship between faith and science by making us understand that science and faith or religion is complimentary, it is basically two sides of one thing. Why? Because science seeks to understand how creation works and faith provides experiences on how our creator works. The theme therefore informs us on the need to strike a connection; what is referred to as the nexus so that the goal; which is global transformation can be made possible. As we graduate today, let us ensure we are grounded in our faith, inquisitive and observant of our surrounding and take advantage of the available technologies to cause greater impact to the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, I wish to state that I am impressed on how far we have come and where God is taking us as a university. Our graduands have continually become our pillars of hope because of their unique character, and skill set which is purely a product of our innovative teaching and training methodologies, Christian ethos and integration of technology to facilitate seamless learning experiences. As we graduate (1802) students today, we have no doubt we are releasing the best of us to go and change the world. Therefore, as you walk out of our gates, be assured that you have all that it takes to conquer the world. We believe in you and our prayer is for God to open supernatural doors of opportunities where you will significantly contribute to the growth of our nation and beyond.

Thank you and God bless you.

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