

A WORD OF WELCOME PRESENTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF CUIB ON THE OCCASION OF THE FRESHMEN & WOMEN CONVOCATION CEREMONY OF THE 2018, 2019 AND 2020 BATCHES OF CUIB, THIS DAY, 11TH NOVEMBER 2016

SALUTATION

I salute His Excellency, the Bishop, Proprietor and Chancellor of CUIB(here represented by the Vicar General of the Diocese of Buea)
The VC of the University of Buea
All other Excellences Here present
I also salute the Members of the CUIB Board of Trustees and University Council
Our Distinguished Professor and Keynote speaker, Prof. Jean-Emmanuel Pondi.
VPs of CUIB
Priests and Religious men and Women,
Our new VIP Parents and Guardians
Invited Guests
Faculty, staff and students of CUIB
I equally salute the newly elected CUIB Student Government Association President of the Dynamic Generation party,
Our Freshmen and women “in *Statu Pupillari*”,
All other Protocol Respected,
Brothers and Sisters in Christ

WELCOME

It is an honor and joy for me today, as President and Pro-Chancellor of CUIB, to welcome all of you to this ceremony which officially marks the entrance of our or Freshmen and women for the 2016/2017 academic year into the CUIB community. In CUIB, we call this Ceremony, Convocation. . This noun stems from the Latin word “convocare” meaning “to call together” which combines the prefix “com”, meaning “together” and “vocare” meaning “to call”. From the word itself you see that no one is called alone; it is always with others. In a real sense, this gathering does not stop even when you will return to your various homes. By being here today, we are committing ourselves to remain together in a common response. And that response is to support the CUIB family to train a new generation of young men and women, Entrepreneurs, Job creators, innovators, Saints and Scholars (*Sancti et Scholari*) workers, directors, consumers, students, administrators, economic workers, rich and poor, families who would be called “homo donator”, persons capable of putting into practice the “culture of giving” in a new society that puts solidarity and sharing at the heart of its understanding of relationships .

Our motto “Sancti et scholar”(Saints and Scholars) articulates our commitment to form integral persons in the Both/And culture: Faith and Reason, Prayer and work, Freedom and Responsibility, Business and Spirituality. As “Saints” we underscore our fervent commitment to train our students to be “the best version of themselves as God created them” to be. No religion...no culture...no country says the meaning of life is to be the worst **possible** version of

yourself... or that the best way to live is by being a second-rate version of yourself. God has not created you to be a second-rate version of yourself. Nor are you here to be another version of your parents, teachers, friends, or brothers and sisters. God forbid!! **You are here to be yourself.**

And as “scholars”, we express our ardent desire to help our students “live to learn and are good at it”. As true and genuine scholars, we believe that our students have bright ideas, their opinion and suggestion counts and should be on the decision table with the management of the university when it comes to taking some major decisions concerning the university and specifically when it will affect the students directly. Also we have a very transparent democratic process in which the whole CUIB family elects the Student Government President. After three big debates as you find in the US, students vote online for their candidates. This year we had a tie in the popular vote between the EOC party and Dynamic Generation. Then the entire Community went back to the polls for elections. Dynamic Generation won by a margin of 2 votes. Today our new STUGA President, **Ambassa Charles** will have the opportunity to present us his team. Isn't this wonderful! Transparent democracy! This and many other meaningful activities show how we hold dear our Students whom we label – VIPs, (Very Important People). Accordingly, calling you to come together to be with us today is to join us to make this vision part our story together. Thank you all so much for coming and for choosing CUIB.

CEREMONY

We are gathered here this morning to give impetus to one of the flagship traditions of CUIB which marks the entrance of new students, *in statu pupillari*, (under guardianship) now for more than one month 8 days into the University community. In CUIB we started honoring the entrance of our new members “under guardianship” on day one when all Administrators, faculty, staff and some returning students lined up at the gate to greet them and give each of them a little present as a sign for our love for all of them. Accordingly, today's ceremony officially concludes that process of your entrance in the community of Saints and Scholars.

Today we also welcome our new Royals, the faculty and staff, and The parents and Guardians of our new VIPs whose love for CUIB made them say Yes to their children to be part of this great university. Today we also officially welcome all our returning students and all the former stakeholders of CUIB. Today too, we officially close the long admission season of the academic year 2015/2016. It has been an exciting process with its challenges, now withstanding. I thank all those who worked hard to ensure that our stakeholders know what we offer in CUIB.

In today's ceremony, all freshmen and women, that is junior members under guardianship (IN STATU PUPILLARI) will take an oath to abide by the rules of the University and sign the University's official Entrance register. It is only after this solemn exercise has been done shall our freshmen, the classes of 2018, 2019 and 2020 be officially recognized as students and will thus, be entitled to all the privileges attached to students of this great institution as well as be bound by all the responsibilities attached to their new status. So my dear freshmen, very soon you will become truly, CUIB VIP.

In today's ceremony, all our Royals will take an oath of Fidelity to respect the ethics, morals, and the mission of this great institution. That ceremony was already completed at the Opening Mass as you all witnessed in front of the Chancellor Representative, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Buea, Mgr Asek Bernard. So we congratulate our Royals, our new Faculty and staff.

2016/2017 ADMISSION SEASON

This year there were 1300 applicants out of which 952 finally got a place into CUIB and are here present. As at today therefore, the number of freshmen stand at 952 as against that of last year which stood at 803 students. The enrolment of this institution has been increasing every year since its creation. The current freshman population therefore represents an increase of about 19% compared to that of last year; bringing the students population to over 2000. For Faculty, we have seen an increase in numbers particularly permanent teachers from 40 to 73. So we have a more than 70% rate of permanent teachers this year. This shows our desire to make our Faculty constantly available to our Students for we believe they need the right coaches in life.

2016/2017 Academic Year – Points of Pride

As regards this academic year, permit me to share with you some of our blessings. Recently, we were accepted as a member institution of the International Federation of Catholic Universities in the World (IFCU) in addition to being a member of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in the US (ACCU). This acceptance is a confirmation that CUIB, though a young university, is making its name at the international scene. It should be noted that CUIB is the First Catholic university in Cameroon to be a member of IFCU as UCAC Yaounde who had earlier been the only member is an Ecclesiastical University for Central African Region. This year, we have been able to move our Schools to the Wokaka campus which has enough offices for our Faculty and Staff. The goal of this is to give students the opportunity to have a one-to-one coaching with their faculty. Wokaka is such a wonderful and quiet place for learning. As regards the Professional Bachelor Programme, we have created two colleges, the College of Technology and the College of Business to ensure better management and efficiency. While Molyko will house most of the College programmes, Wokaka will focus on the 4 year degree programmes. Our students continue to win awards – Three of our students were selected for Tony Elumelu Foundation Award to train 1.000 entrepreneurs in Africa. Four of our students just returned from the US embassy sponsored SUSI programme. Three of our students won the STEM prize that took place recently in Yaounde – 1.5 million FCFA to support their project for the production of AVOCADO Oil. For the HND result of 2016, the overall second Best Student for Civil Engineering in Cameroon is from CUIB. Two faculty and a student are currently doing internship in the US with the St Benedict's Press in Charlotte, USA. Recently, one of our players in the CUIB sports academy was shortlisted for the national team selection. Miss Tourism Cameroon was won by a student of CUIB. This year we were able to have a seminar with 16 of our Faculty and Administrators in the US to build their capacity with one of our mentor Universities, the University of St Thomas. We just signed a new memorandum of understanding with Delaware State University (DSU). All these are signs of our commitment to be the premier game changer of entrepreneurial education in Cameroon.

STUDENTS IN STATU PUPILLARI – vision 2020 batch

My dear Freshmen and women, in *statu pupillari*(under guardianship) on this historic day of yours, permit me to make an appeal to you. I would like you to join me and the entire CUIB family to address what I consider one of the most disturbing attitudes or Mind-set that I continue to find with many young people that I encounter today: ***It is their lack of hope and dissipation of human energy.*** This is not a Cameroon problem only. I continually see this as I travel to other countries. Give a conference to young people or academic discourse. After 15-20 minutes of sharing, majority of them get restless, unfocused and tired. They look like they have already lost their energy when you are just beginning to harness one. One cannot determine whether the problem is with you speaking or with them. How do we account for this loss of energy? One indication for this low energy level I have come to realize is boredom. Many young people seem to get bored so early in life. Our VIP parents, have you noticed this about most of our young generation? They have not yet lived enough but they are already bored with life. To remedy the boredom, they create what I have termed “happenings”, that is constant shifting of attention from one activity to another like one using a remote control to change channels on the Television as soon as he or she is bored.

Reflecting on this boredom and loss of hope, I ask: What gives energy? What gave our parents energy to work hard to sponsor us in School with little or nothing? What gave Nelson Mandela energy to remain focus in prison for more than 27 years to fight the evil of apartheid? What made Jeff Bezos to build an online bookstore that has grown into one of the giants of the World Wide Web Age – Amazon? What gave Martin Luther King Jr the energy to fight and to die? It is simple: Visions, dreams. Most of the world remembers Martin Luther King Jr’s “I have a dream” When there are dreams, when there are powerful gripping dreams, we always have energy to spare. The person with vision will have something to die for, something to offer one’s life for, and if one has something to die for, then one has something to live for. One will have energy to die and, of course, one will have energy to live. My fear today is that we may be living in a period of human history where many people do not have compelling visions or dreams and therefore might have no energy.

Just listen to some of the dreams of some young people: “What is your dream in life?”. Father, my dream is I want to have an “I” phone. Or Father, I want to drive a Rav 4”. If you call these dreams then you will not have energy, for that is not the type of dream that will stir in you the flames of energy. I have come to discover that this lack of vision leads to a kind of violence committed by people who are frustrated and bored. You find this in the rioting that took place sometimes in South Africa when young people went to the streets and destroying homes of foreigners. This vision-less search brings forth tiredness, tiredness gives birth to frustration, and frustration breeds violence. This violence is coupled with intolerance of the other, which is a very puzzling thing. And when people are more and more intolerant of the other it is usually the “others” who become scapegoats for the ill that they find in their society. They turn to the ABC syndrome – Accuse, blame and condemn everyone except themselves for their lack of energy. They do not want to admit that life is becoming meaningless for them. They do not even have the energy to understand it. It is easy to blame “the others” for whatever goes wrong. This happens among members of families, neighbours living in the same block, friends, teachers,

employees, students, people of all kinds of societal structure, young and old. Now you have the short cut – run to the man of God, give your tithes, and everything is over. What a sad situation.

So the question is what do we do? Your batch stands at the crossroad of CUIB's growth to do something. Your batch as you know will see the full realization of Vision 2020 of my Presidency. Isn't this wonderful? You will not only be the Vision 2020 Batch but the batch that will begin and bring to fruition the realization element 5 of my vision 2020 – the Eucharist Community. This visionary goal is summarized beautifully in the Hebrew Word BERAKAH. So you are indeed the BERAKAH Batch. What is BERAKAH? BERAKAH, from which the Greek translated as “Eucharist” (thanksgiving) has three distinct meanings. *It means to Praise, to thank or to Bless.* The Jews knew that they were a chosen people and God had been so much to them, done so much for them, stood by them so consistently, that the only possible response was BERAKAH! – we praise you, we thank you, we bless you for all that you have done for us. In the realization of all that God had initiated and done for them, the Hebrew people developed a spirituality based on GRATITUDE, APPRECIATION, and JOYFUL PRAISE. A truly devout Jew was encouraged to exclaim “BERAKAH” one hundred times each day – not as a fiction, but in a deliberate attempt to notice life's goodness and to acknowledge God as the source of it all. Disciples of Berakah have a vision –driven mindset. They are focus, appreciative, hardworking, kind, supportive, appreciate others and their goodness. Berakah disciples do not blackmail others, or run them down or are envious or jealous. Instead they work together with others to look for solutions and have a growth-mindset. Berakah disciples are determined people and trust that their God will see them through. Berakah disciples develop the capacity to notice life's blessed moments and celebrate it as a gift, as BERAKAH. The scriptures remind us that this way of thinking was what marked the life of Christ. In the Scriptures Jesus is vividly portrayed in the different accounts of the Last supper and the Feeding stories of the Gospels and a Berakah personality. In these stories Jesus “takes the bread” and “raising his eyes to heaven” he gives thanks (or “says the blessing or Berakah). On occasions when the crowds are waiting to be fed and the resources for doing so are few(five loaves and two fish) Jesus expresses his gratitude for having even that. But what then is the Berakah message for you today?

It is simple, You are special in CUIB, You are VIPs. As you have stepped your feet into the City of Saints and Scholars, do not consider that you are from a poor home, or disadvantaged background or incapable of succeeding. There is nothing little that you have received that will prevent you from saying BERAKAH. Even when you are mocked by your friends, and insulted that you did not get A grades, or considered insignificant like Christ, be ready to exclaim “BERAKAH”.. No matter what obstacles or mountains you will encounter in CUIB, do not forget to exclaim – BERAKAH. Remember, the creator who brought you to life and has seen you through to this moment will take you to the end and so we say: BERAKAH. You are in sure Hands- BERAKAH. You are in the Right place, BERAKAH, You are in the Right CITY, BERAKAH. You are truly saints and Scholars, BERAKAH, Amen.

God bless you all!

Done, this day, Friday 11th November,

Feast of St Martin of Tours.

Fr George Nkeze Jingwa

President, CUIB, Cameroon.