

Our Guest of Honor, Dr. Richard Rajarathinam, the Founder and CEO of Office Care Maryland,
USA

Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament

The RDC Luweero District

The L C 5 Chairperson

The Area Member of Parliament

Officials from the Buganda Kingdom

The L C 3 Chairperson

The L C 1 Chairman

All protocol observed

The Chancellor, Pr. (Dr.) John Kakembo (in your absence)

Dear Board of Directors

Dear University Council Members

Our Consecration Speaker Pastor Mussa Daniel Mika, Director of Media, South Tanzania Union
Mission

Our Baccalaureate speaker Prof. Owusu-Antwi, Vice Chancellor of Adventist University of Africa,
Nairobi, Kenya

Vice Chancellors and Heads of Sister Institutions which I would like to introduce personally

Members from the National Council for Higher Education

The Executive Director, Inter University Council of East Africa

The Executive Director of Elgonview College, Kenya, Mr. Anassi a prominent Lawyer

Uganda Union officers

Coordinators of our centres in Uganda

Central Uganda Conference officers

Officers from the Fields

Pastors

Heads/Representatives from our financial institutions including Ecobank, Bank of Africa, Equity
bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Barclays, etc.

Other Dignitaries here present

Our sponsors and promoters

Community members

The President, officers and members of the Alumni Association

The Graduation class sponsors

The Graduation Class President and officers

Dear Graduands, 2014

Invited guests

Parents of the graduands

The sponsors and family members of the graduands

Dear Faculty and Staff members

Dear Students

Ladies & Gentlemen

On behalf of the University fraternity, staff, faculty, students, my fellow administrators and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome each one of you to our small but beautiful and God ordained campus. It is on this campus where we see nature, the love of God, beauty, serenity with an ambience which greets with all humanity and hospitality. So once again welcome. I want you to consider yourself “excellently” important because we are indeed privileged to have a guest like you, going to spend almost a whole day with us.

To the speakers, I would like to welcome you, and thank you for accepting our invitation to visit our campus and to talk to the graduands.

The Consecration speaker, Pastor Mussa Daniel Mika we would like to thank you so much. Please do extend our greetings to the Union President and the Executive Committee members. Tell them, we still need more students from their territory because we always give them the best education.

To the Baccalaureate speaker, Prof. Owusu-Antwi, Vice Chancellor of Adventist University of Africa, even though you could not stay for the Commencement exercise, there are no words to describe the love you have for this institution. Note that the university fraternity has fallen in love with you. You have been with us on five consecutive graduations. Infact, no one here can beat your record. We really do appreciate the time you always spend with us even amidst your very tight schedule.

And now to the Commencement speaker, Dr. Rajarathinam, welcome back to the campus of the institution which has become a part of you. We know that anywhere you go in the United States of America, as the CEO of Office Care, you sing the tune of Bugema to all that you meet. No wonder you have formed an association known as 'Friends of Bugema'. Thank you for the many kind gestures shown to this institution. To mention but a few, construction of the Arch of

Knowledge, an idea both of us borrowed from Washington Adventist University, sponsorship given to students, sponsorship for evangelism, sponsorship in sending speakers for our weeks of prayer, and now your determination to help Bugema University construct a building for the School of Theology and Religious Studies. May the good Lord bless you and your family.

Bugema University has witnessed a lot of expansion and moderate growth since last graduation. The road has never been very smooth. We have met our own waterloos from different fronts but the Lord has sailed us through till today. Thanks be to His holy name. In fact, we thank the Lord for those challenges we have handled, because each of them acted as a stepping stone, and were never considered as stumbling blocks.

In the area of enrolment, we crossed the 5000 mark ending the academic year 2013-2014 with 5325 students. Amazingly, the statistics revealed a greater percentage of Ugandan students. This trend was phenomenal sensing that a day is coming when Ugandan universities will have only a limited number of foreign students due to the policies enacted by various governments in the East African Community. On this note, I would like to thank the Pastors, Elders, Church members and stakeholders for seeing the need and the light by sending students to their very own institution. This academic year we hope to maintain the same number of enrolled students as we embark upon expanding our infrastructure.

We have embarked upon expanding our infrastructure by providing more accommodation for the students with a hostel bought for the men, a hostel for the Institute of Professional Growth students, toilet facilities, and completion of the classroom block for Institute of Professional Growth. Plans are in the pipeline to construct a hostel complex with a contribution from some of our stakeholders. The expansion of the library is also under review. A plan is also conceived for the construction of a Science block even as we plan to offer pure Science courses as soon as possible.

We have improved upon our academics. Last academic year, we introduced a degree in Public Administration as a course of study. This academic year we have passed a vote in the Senate to offer Bachelors in Public Health, Journalism and Mass Communication. All things being equal we plan to offer Diploma and Bachelors degree in Nursing, Bachelors degrees in Biochemistry and Environmental Science, Chemistry, Agriculture Science and Industrial Chemistry. For this, we are going to spend on a modern laboratory which will be ready before the academic year ends.

In the area of Faculty development, we have six faculty members sponsored to do their doctoral studies in different areas of study; and five for Masters programs. This is an area we are not joking with for the successful and effective implementation of our programs. This year we have Dr. Moses Kayongo, Dr. (Mrs.) Rhoda Kayongo and their children joining the University family after completing their doctorates in Public Health and Educational Management from the Philippines. We would like to welcome them in a very special way. They are children of the soil.

We also have one medical doctor, two experienced nurses, and one music teacher joined who joined us from the Philippines. We would like to welcome them in a special way.

All of you who follow the news might have seen and read about the laurel that was bestowed upon Bugema University in the area of sports. Joshua Cheptegei, a sponsored student by Bugema University won a gold medal in marathon race in Oregon, USA. Bugema was highly recognized not only by the Ministry of Education and Sports but an invitation was also extended by the President of the Republic of Uganda to Bugema administration to the State House to appreciate our contribution and to facilitate the athlete.

In the area of sports we are going to have an International Sports Complex with the help of Honorable John Byabagambi, the State Minister for Works and Transport. The area is cleared, and engineers are on the ground to divide the area into the different sporting divisions which will include football, netball, basketball, table tennis, swimming pool, etc. We hope to finish this within a year and put it into use.

All these developments have put Bugema University high in the ranking position of Universities

Again I want to thank the Lord for this day which he has given us to see our graduands march out through the Arch of Knowledge as they prepare themselves to go out into the world to serve humanity. We thank God for your success. And now, I would like to speak to you first before our Guest of Honor takes his stand.

Dear graduands, you are a special people. 2014 graduands! Some of you have spent exactly the required three years in this institution. Some, fortunately or unfortunately have spent more than three years. Whatever it is, today you are graduating. Bravo!

As Charles Swindoll wrote, graduation marks an ending and a beginning. There are smiles, hugs, tears, shouts of joy, and caps sailing high into the air along with hopes and dreams. It is a time of celebration, excitement, and full – throttle enthusiasm.

Great word, “enthusiasm”. Its Greek origin is ‘entheos’, “God in”. It is the ability to see God in a situation that makes it exciting as it is today. Do you know that God has been watching over your life? Something happens to us when we become convinced that God our heavenly Father is aware of and involved in our activities and is, infact, applauding our lives.

Think of all you have accomplished to this point. Try to imagine the horizons and challenges of your future. As you mentally travel from the vanishing point of yesterday to the vanishing point of tomorrow you will find that God has been and always will be present. There is not a place in the entire scopes of your existence where God is not there. There is purpose, there is meaning in the presence of God. Even in the things we may consider pointless, insignificant, trivial, or boring.

Therefore, as you graduate, I’d like to challenge you to follow God’s best. More specially, to live a ‘God – enthused’ life.

Dear graduands, life is a lot like a coin, you can spend it any way you wish, but you can spend it only once. Choosing one thing over all the rest throughout life is a difficult thing to do. This is especially true when the choices are so many and the possibilities are so close. But I want you to get your priorities right. What tangibles are you holding onto? What are you gripping tightly? Have they become your security? Life places before us hundreds of possibilities. Some are bad, many are good, and a few, the best. But each of us must decide. What is your reason for living? In other words, what priority takes first place in your life?

You may be surprised to know that for any number of people, you are the person others point to. It may be in the place where you will work, and no one will tell you. It may happen where you live, and no neighbor has been brave enough to encourage you by saying, “you’re the one everybody watches. You are very unique. We all respect you”. If you know how many people feel that way, I’m convinced that you would be all the more careful how you live. It takes unusual people to make a difference in our world. Mediocre people impact no one, at least not for good. But one person of truth can impact the whole world.

Be a person of integrity, dear graduands. It all depends on who's first and what's first. Breaking the magnet that draws things ahead of God is a lengthy and sometimes painful process. There is a line in the Jewish Talmud that puts it well: "Man is born with his hands clenched; he dies with them wide open. Entering life, he desires to grasp everything; leaving the world, all he/she possessed has slipped away". Remember if you get a good job, it's to be enjoyed for Him. If you get a nice salary, it's to be enjoyed and invested for Him. Do you have good health? It is for Him. Are you thinking about a career now? It needs to be for Him. That is true because He's the ruler of our kingdom. He is Lord just remember, whatever is in first place, if it isn't Christ alone, it is in the wrong place.

Remember dear graduands, that whoever decides to soar must first fight through the flatland fog that hangs heavy over the swamp of sameness.

Be committed. Remember that if you are in life only for yourself, you will have no endurance. When you are positioned well in life don't try to maintain a balance by maneuvering and manipulating, lying, deceiving and scheming. Give all that you have and will have to the Lord God, and trust Him to give back all that you need. The secret of having a life of excellence is merely a matter of thinking thoughts of excellence. It is a matter of programming our minds with the kind of information that will set us free.

Dream big. This is the stuff of which leaders are made. If you don't dream, your vision is seriously limited. To make things even more complicated, those who refuse to dream the impossible are always in the majority. Those who choose to live by sight will always outnumber those who live by faith. So once you've decided to live differently let God be your guide and hang tough. Follow your dreams with determination

Dear graduands be determined. The thought is keep on continually seeking. Decide to hang tough regardless. We need to keep in mind the difference between natural sight and supernatural vision. A fusion of the two will enable us to handle times of prosperity and popularity with wisdom; and also will help us find a way of softening the blows of calamity, giving us hope through tragedy and loss. In 2 Timothy 4:1 Paul writes to young Timothy, "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season". That is a nice way of saying, "Hang tough! Do it when it comes naturally and when it is hard to come by. Do it when you're up, do it when you're down. Do it when you feel like it, do it when you don't feel like it. Do it when it's hot, do it when it's cold. Keep on doing it. Don't give up. That is persistence and determination. Staying at it. Hanging tough with dogged discipline. When you get whipped or when you win, the secret is staying at it.

'Excellence' must be your watchword. Mediocrity is fast becoming the by-word of our times. Every imaginable excuse is now used to make it acceptable, hopefully preferred. Time deadlines, majority opinions and hard-nosed practicality are outstanding and outrunning excellence. You may ask yourself, why think clearly since most folks want someone else to think for them? Why

live differently in a society where it is so much easier to look the same and swim downstream?
Why fight fiercely when so few seem to care? Why stand courage