

**MATRICULATION OF THE 2013/2014 BATCH OF STUDENTS INTO THE
UNIVERSITY OF BUEA.**

Date: November 02, 2013

Theme: LOVE, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PATRIOTISM.

By

Guest Speaker, Barrister Nico Halle.

The Governor of the South West Region;
The Chancellor;
The Pro-Chancellor;
The Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellors;
The Registrar;
Eminent Media Men;
Traditional Rulers;
The Student body;
Distinguished Invitees;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Permit me start by thanking God for this day. Indeed, God loves you and me very dearly. Today, we have seated here with us about 6000 new students who have just brilliantly passed their “A” Levels and have most likely come here because they have heard nice stories about the University of Buea – “the place to be”. Immense congratulations to you the students for coming this far.

My sincere gratitude goes to Mme Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nalova Lyonga, for inviting and affording me the singular opportunity to fellowship with you all seated here within the confines of this formidable citadel of learning on the occasion of this year’s Matriculation Ceremony. I am indeed exceedingly humbled.

In my invitation letter, Mme Vice Chancellor requested me to give a thirty minute address on any topic of my choice. A blank check indeed. I decided to talk on Love, Justice, Peace and Patriotism, as people all over the globe need this so badly given the worrying unstable nature of this beautiful God-given world. The address is simple, devoid of legal jargons and terminology, to avoid any insinuations, innuendoes or misrepresentations.

LOVE

My dear friends, Love can be referred to as a virtue representing human kindness, compassion, and affection— the unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another. It may also describe compassionate and affectionate acts towards other people.

- Jesus in Mark 12: 29-31 says: The most important commandment is: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second most important commandment is like unto the first: Love your neighbour as you love yourself. There is no other commandment more important than these two.
- The celebrated Apostle Paul aptly glorifies love as the most important virtue of all. In 1st Cor. 13: 4-7, he says, Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope and patience never fail.
- Jesus Christ epitomizes love in The Golden Rule in the Bible: Do for others what you want them to do for you. Matt. 7:12.

Distinguished invitees, dear staff and students, Apostle Paul tells us what Love is, and is not. If we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; loving our neighbour as ourselves; we would not be arrogant, ill-mannered, selfish, irritable, violent, destructive, unforgiving, untruthful, for Love endures all things.

It follows therefore that if all of us live according to the tenets which Paul upholds, the world will be a better place to live in. The venerated Cardinal Christian Tumi has both aptly and eloquently articulated that if the love for God and the love for one another are respected to the letter, there will be harmony. Love brings unity. Unity is strength for mutual growth and benefit.

From the above therefore, where there is Love, there is Justice. Where there is Justice the rights and obligations of everyone are respected. When this is the case, there will be peace. With peace, the students will undoubtedly excel, and make the University of Buea a better place to be.

JUSTICE

Ladies and gentlemen, Justice is a concept of moral rectitude based on ethics, rationality, natural law, religion, equity and fairness; taking into account the inalienable rights of all human beings to equal protection before the law, without discrimination to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, colour, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, or other characteristics.

It is strongly suggested that students who involve themselves in nefarious activities such as molestation, vandalism, violence, destruction, strikes and riots, just to name a few, should be called to order. Analogously, the individuals responsible for inciting and carrying out such acts should be held responsible. In this way, the University milieu will be a safer place to be and the students will be able to study in a conducive environment.

In the same light, dishonest and unscrupulous lecturers, those who receive bribe, who prey on female/male students; and the administrators who embezzle or misappropriate funds intended for the development of the University should be held accountable. It is their greed that stifles the progress of the Students and the University as a whole.

PEACE

Dearly beloved friends, true Peace is a state of harmony characterized by the absence of violence. It is commonly understood as the absence of hostility, where conflicts are resolved through dialogue. Peace is the product of justice and equity.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ says, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God. Matt. 5:9.

Are we peace-makers? If yes, we are the children of God. It is regrettable that elsewhere some of our institutions have been everything but peaceful.

However, Lecturers and those in decision-making positions for the sake of peace and tranquility should respect students' rights and listen to them. The most popular reason given by rioters is that they want their voices heard. Consequently, the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Lecturers should jointly and severally pay both uninterrupted and undiluted attention to the voices of the students and should do their utmost in ensuring that their regulated and legal needs are attended to so as to avert any atmosphere of discontent that might undermine peace.

In this connection, it is strongly recommended that each time there are differences and grievances within the University, truth and dialogue should be employed. We should however note that Truth without Love is Brutality; Love without Truth is Hypocrisy.

A classic example of the importance of dialogue is the Historic 2006 Green Tree Peace Accord between Cameroon and Nigeria, brokered by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Without dialogue and peace, millions of Cameroonians and Nigerians would have already perished in war. Our President, Paul Biya, and former Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo patriotically shelved their pride, ego and self-interest for the good and safety of their people.

In the same light, we should put peace and dialogue first in the face of our differences and prejudices. Do remember that what we destroy - benches, classrooms, buildings, cars, hostels and equipment – all belong to us and are there for our use. By destroying them, we deprive ourselves of what is ours.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

Have we not heard and read of Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Barack Obama, all of whom won the Nobel Peace Prize for their permanent attachment to Peace? Have we not also learnt of Mahatma Gandhi, who although not a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has never been forgotten owing to his tenacious grip on the doctrine of non-violence? I exhort you to work towards this invaluable prize.

The Cameroonian people are peace-loving, Law-abiding and God-fearing. Hence our patriotic Chiefs and people of the South West Region are peaceful. I congratulate them for this feat. It is therefore expected that we all seated here should toe the line and live in Peace. This is my clarion call.

I have constantly said that Peace is the weapon of the Strong, Wise, Pace Setter, Achiever, Patriotic, Nation-builder whereas Violence is the weapon of the weak, foolish, nonentity, nincompoop, lunatic and unachiever. Your attachment to love and peace should be unconditional, unquestionable and unimpeachable.

PATRIOTISM

Dear students, on gracefully becoming President of the United States of America, John F. Kennedy in his inaugural speech on January 20th 1961 said: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country". We need to ask ourselves what we are doing for UB and our Nation. There is need for Community Development in the University.

All of us seated here are blessed with varied and various gifts. The soft-spoken emblematic Moderator of the PCC, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Festus Asana, exhorts us to use our various gifts from God for the good of others and to His glory.

A social group which is instrumental and useful in the University milieu is the Students' Union. I encourage you to be active members of this Union, attend meetings and make constructive suggestions which can positively impact your stay while at the University and thereafter.

The President of the Students' Union must be peaceful, diplomatic; knowing how to deal with complaints raised by his peers. Given that the Student's Union is a very important component of the University, the person at the helm should not only be popular but forthcoming, having the interests of both the Students and the University at heart. In short, he should be of proven integrity.

Isn't the future of our Beloved Nation indisputably in your hands? Aren't you who are seated right here the next Generals, Directors, Lawyers, Lecturers, Magistrates, Professors, Pastors, Deans, Vice Chancellors, Ministers, PM, President, etc., in short leaders of tomorrow par excellence?

Dear friends, I am glad to note that you are coming here at the time when the academic and student body are fully reconciled, and there is total calm and serenity. I cogently implore you to respect your university peers, lecturers and the administration; to remain undividedly focused on your studies and make your parents, friends and lecturers proud. Do all it takes to consolidate the peace that reigns here. I also enjoin you to be loyal to State Institutions.

May I formally take the liberty to congratulate the Vice Chancellor - a lady of exceptional integrity - who has unassumingly with her colleagues and staff, indefatigably championed meaningful dialogue that has brought lasting peace to UB. Give it to her, give it to them. We shall know them by their fruits.

I also hear of projects realized by Mme Vice Chancellor since her brilliant appointment, including the recent inauguration by H.E. Jacques Fame Ndongo - Minister for Higher Education, of the Teaching Laboratory block of the Faculty of Health Sciences of UB. Madame Kudos. Gratitude also to the Minister for Higher Education for providing the funding.

My dear student friends, I solemnly challenge you to shun and condemn all forms of moral decadence including promiscuity, homosexuality, “sexually transmissible marks”, 419, mafia, smoking, drinking, gambling, fighting, cheating at exams, scamming, occultism, extremism, fundamentalism, hypocrisy, falsehood, blackmail, backstabbing, witch-hunting, bribery, corruption, embezzlement, etc.

Yes, despite the above challenges staring us in the face, I remain optimistic and confident that UB still remains an enviable place to be and will only grow from height to height. One more time, congratulations on coming here from various Regions and beyond in search of the Golden Fleece.

Let me not forget to underscore the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10). We may have ten PhD's or occupy whatever posts in the society and still remain destructive elements if we do not have the fear of the Lord.

Yes, it would be unwholesome if I end without paying glowing tribute to the former VCs who have left their mark at UB. They are: the venerated Prof. Dorothy Njeuma, Prof. Cornelius Lambi, and Prof. Vincent Titanji. May God continue to bless them wherever they are.

Yet, to the students and staff who have passed on to glory, may we observe a moment of silence in paying them homage. May their souls rest in the Lord.

My dear student friends, it was definitely a pleasure to be afforded the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on some of the challenges ahead of you, as you embark on this important journey in your lives.

Distinguished Invitees;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Permit me end in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. May God bless the Students, the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellors, the Registrar, the Lecturers, the Administration, the South West Region and Cameroon.

Immense thanks for your kind attention.

I love you all.

Barrister Nico Halle
International Legal Consultant

Contacts:

Nico Halle & Co. Law Firm
1st Floor SHALOM Building,
Opposite Pharmacie du Pont/Express Union
Ancienne Route, Bonassama – Bonaberi
B.P.: 4876 Douala – Cameroon
Tel. 33 42 64 79
Email: hallelaw@hallelaw.com