

2022 ACADEMIC CONVOCATION SPEECH
By Mrs. Prof. Rachel K. Gesami, PhD, MBS
Deputy Vice Chancellor/Academic Affairs & Research

Our Chief Guest

Most Rev. Phillip Subira Anyolo

*Archbishop, Catholic Arch-Diocese of Nairobi and
Pro-Chancellor of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa*

Very Rev. Prof. Stephen Mbugua Ngari

Rector and Vice Chancellor of The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Mr. James Theuri

*Special Advisor to the Vice Chancellor - In charge of Administration, Finance and
Planning*

Vice Chancellor, Principals and Directors of Constituent and Affiliate Colleges

Deans and Directors of Faculties and Schools

Esteemed Professors

University Staff and Students

All Protocols observed!

Good Morning!

I am delighted to join each one of you this morning as we start our new Academic Year 2022/2023 and welcome you to this Convocation ceremony. CUEA is a special and unique institution and our mission has attracted many wonderful people, some as students, some as staff and many who have done both. Each one of us has a great story to tell.

Here in CUEA, we are a community that values learning. Our modest but heartfelt Vision is to be a world class University producing transformative leaders for Church and Society with a Mission to promote excellence in research, teaching and

community service by preparing morally upright leaders based on the intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church. We regard these two pursuits as mutually reinforcing, a belief that is exemplified by our defining commitments. For those very new to CUEA, note that our *Motto is: Consecrate them in the Truth*". *John 17:17*

Academic convocation is an important event of the year for our University. Not only because it marks the commencement of our University's new academic year, but also a welcoming occasion to the incoming first year students who provide a life assurance to our University with a fresh burst of talent, imagination and spirit.

For our new students, am here to tell you that college education is not something that students receive or consume; it is something that you make, by investing your effort and your time to confront provocative questions, to understand complicated ideas, engage in research and sharpen your thinking. That is part of what makes learning so challenging—the need to persist, to keep going, to put in the hard work even when it doesn't feel like you're making progress. In that respect, we recognize that you are doing something difficult, and admirable, in the pursuit of your own academic goals. Even in the best of times, learning requires hard work, commitment, support and luck. Remember to always pray because God guides, protects and embraces those who seek Him for direction and grace.

For our staff continue to carry high the CUEA banner embedded in the three pillars of Teaching, Research and Community Service. I call upon my colleagues in the faculties and in administration to be committed to finding innovative ways to teach, to connect and build the CUEA community to greater heights. We want

to make sure that our students get the best education and we are working with vigor and creativity to achieve this.

I invite all of you to embrace and respectfully participate in scholarly conversations. Accepting that responsibility will require difficult and sensitive conversations, in class discussions and beyond. It will call upon us both to speak up bravely for what we believe in and to treat those with whom we disagree with respect.

As we proceed to the new academic year....let us remember these basic things...

First, Integrity: if you carry out your responsibilities consistently, to the best of your ability, people will trust you as a colleague and turn to you for leadership.

Second, Courage: in the face of adversity and even tragedy, try to remember the reasons for optimism – and never be afraid to ask for help. Look after yourself – especially your health, both physical and mental.

As I conclude my remarks, I wish to welcome the new members of the teaching staff and congratulate those who have taken the vow of service in imparting knowledge. To those given new responsibilities to serve, Congratulations! We look forward to your valued contribution to research, teaching and learning, and community service. St. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest thinkers of the Catholic Church identifies three ways people are made in the image of God: by our autonomy, by our search for the truth, and in the image of the Holy Spirit “as beings of fire, that is to say, love and charity.” Please strive to use your autonomy not for selfishness, but for selflessness

Thank You and May Almighty God continue blessing our Community.