



## Ushering in and Celebrating a New Dawn for Greater Service to Church and Society

The Tangaza University Vice Chancellor, Rev Prof. Patrick Mwania, CSSp has welcomed every one that has joined the university this semester. In his Convocation Speech during the Inaugural Ceremony to usher in the 2024-2025 Academic Year, Fr. Mwania applauded new and returning students, faculty and the various stakeholders to Tangaza University as they gathered to usher in the new academic year.

The academic year, whose theme is Celebrating a New Dawn for Greater Service to Church and Society is special as Tangaza celebrates the Award of Charter. The inauguration ceremony marks one of the newest chartered private universities in Kenya, allowed to operate autonomously, in her own right.

The Professor described the attainment of university status by Tangaza in May this year as a testament of the collective commitment to excellence and quality in academics, research and community engagement that are vital pillars of university education.

Fr. Mwania warmly welcomed the new students and assured them that they had made the best decision to join Tangaza. He pledged to them that they will never regret this decision. He further thanked them for believing in the university and its mission of

transformation, and saluted the trust they put on the university. As head of administration in the day-to-day running of Tangaza, the Professor committed to do everything possible to ensure that the University does not betray that trust.



He additionally explained that as a Catholic University, Catholic identity is a keystone for Tangaza's mission. This is embedded in the continuous quest for truth through teaching and research, that promote the worldview promoted by the Gospel of Christ. To remain faithful to this call, the university recently established a directorate of Catholic Identity and Community Engagement. This is to ensure Tangaza gives a

living expression of Christian faith and the Gospel of Christ throughout their lives and operations at the university.

The Vice Chancellor noted that the administration has set aside an hour every Thursday for the University Mass. He explained that all other services are suspended so that everyone participates in this hour of prayer. There is no other activity within this hour, and appealed to everyone to participate.



He reminded the students that they are the heart of the institution, whether they are just beginning their academic journey at Tangaza, or returning to continue their studies. He urged them to embrace the academic challenges and opportunities that this university offers.

The Professor pointed out that education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, but one that should end with the development of character. What remains after everything is the character of a person in today's world, Fr. Mwanja remarked.

The Vice Chancellor explained that this year, as the university builds on her new status, the fraternity is presented with a unique opportunity to redefine the scope and impact of her academic programmes. Tangaza, he added, has always prided herself in delivering education that is not only rigorous but also relevant to the needs of society.

Fr. Mwanja clarified that the new status allows Tangaza to expand her research capabilities, to develop new areas of study, and to forge stronger connections between theory and practice. He encouraged each one present, student or faculty, to think creatively about how to push the boundaries of the university disciplines, in order to contribute to the global body of knowledge, and address the pressing issues of our time.

He expressed his joy to the new students, whom he said are joining the institution at a time of great excitement and potential.

“You have chosen to begin your academic career at a university that is on the rise, a place where your intellectual curiosity will be nurtured and your ambitions supported.” He told them.

The Professor implored them to follow the counsel of Malcolm X who once said that education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today. He reminded them that as they immerse themselves in their studies, they should remember that education is a collaborative endeavor. He advised them to engage with their peers, seek out new perspectives, and take full advantage of the resources available to them.

“This is your time to explore, to question, and to grow.” He told them.

For the returning students, the Vice Chancellor pointed out that they have already demonstrated their dedication and resilience by navigating the challenges of their earlier years at Tangaza. He asked them to grab the opportunity to build upon the foundation they have established now, as they step into the new phase as a university. He reminded them that this is their moment to deepen their understanding of their chosen field, and to undertake research that pushes the frontiers of knowledge. The Professor asked them to prepare for the professional world with the confidence that they are graduates of a respected institution.



In the same vein, Fr. Mwanja extolled the Tangaza faculty, as the stewards of this academic community, saying that transforming the lives of their students cannot be overstated. He encouraged them to continue to pursue excellence in teaching and research, and take full advantage of the opportunities that come with the University's new status to innovate in curricula, expand research portfolios, and engage deeply with the global academic community. He observed that their leadership in these areas will enhance the reputation of Tangaza, and prepare the



the students to be leaders in their respective fields.

To the non-teaching staff, the Vice Chancellor noted that their support is essential to the functioning of the university academic mission as they create the environment in which learning and research can thrive. He explained that whatever role they played, their contributions enable the faculty and students to focus on their academic goals. Fr Mwanja further explained that as the Tangaza community embraces the responsibilities that come with the new status, their work will still be crucial to her success, and thanked them for their dedication and professionalism.

The Professor commended members of the University Council and the Board of Trustees, for their vision and support, that have been instrumental in guiding the university to this significant achievement. He described the journey from college to university as challenging, but their commitment to the academic mission has been unwavering. As the university moves forward, their leadership remains vital in ensuring that she grows and fulfils her potential as a centre of learning and research excellence, he added.

The VC praised the sponsors for their belief in the power of education which has made all of this possible. He pointed at their support as a lifeblood that has allowed the university to expand academic programmes, invest in research, and provide students with the best possible learning environment. He expressed confidence in their unwavering support, that guarantees to yield positive results for the students and society as a whole. This, even as the university looks to the future, and especially in the expansion of her physical infrastructure.

In conclusion, Fr. Mwanja requested the gathering to strive not just for personal success but for the advancement of knowledge and the betterment of society as they embark on the new academic year. He invited them to remain committed to the values of Tangaza that have brought the University this far.

## **Keynote Address by Rev. Prof. Lawrence Njoroge During the Inaugural Convocation of the 2024/2025 Academic Year**

By Roman tradition, a professor gives what is known as a “Lectio Brevis” on the first day of class. This is a brief introduction, after which the class ends early.

In his keynote address, renowned scholar, Prof Lawrence Njoroge, gave the “Lectio Brevis” as part of

of his speech. This marked an interesting start to the Inaugural Convocation of the 2024/2025 Academic Year at the Tangaza University.

Fr. Njoroge started by congratulating the Tangaza University community on a well-deserved, pivotal achievement. The award of a charter that turned the institution into a full-fledged university.

The university, one of two newest in Kenya, emerged from Tangaza College that was blessed and formally inaugurated by His Eminence Maurice Cardinal Otunga, Archbishop of Nairobi in October 1987. Professor Njoroge recommended that this new Tangaza University should emulate and promote the values of this good and holy Servant of God.

A quick glance at her history, he noted, shows that it took 37 years from the founding of Tangaza to attain full-fledged university status. The award of charter thus, is a pivotal achievement, that is well deserved and therefore should be celebrated, he added.



Prof Njoroge observed that collaboration is central to the life, operations and success of the University. This collaboration, he explained, is where Tangaza started, when three Religious Congregations, planted the initial seed in 1986. Likewise, he credited collaborative intervention as work that saw Tangaza squarely solve a major crisis she faced two years ago.

The inaugural address for the academic year 2024/2025 themed “Celebrating a New Dawn for Greater Service to Church and Society”, Fr. Njoroge noted that Tangaza has good programmes that train scholars to engage in a rigorous and creative approach to learning. He therefore emphasized that the University should continue to identify its niche areas of specialization, as she has made a name for herself in specific disciplines and its approach

to professional education.

“In a word, Tangaza University must aspire to be its own brand.” He said.

The Professor disclosed that Tangaza University is extremely respected in higher education circles, by persons, institutions, and the market. He added that he had the honour and benefit of serving in two national education task-forces; the Public Universities Inspection Board (PUIB) of 2005, and in the National Strategy for University Education (NSUE) of 2007. Both, task-forces he said, collected evidence from Tangaza College, among other Institutions of higher learning, and found that Tangaza ranked among the best in quality of teaching and training in values and skills.

Education, he explained, is informative and cognitive, shapes character and imparts values, and therefore it is formative, and transforms people. He further clarified that because it is dialogical, education trains people to converse in society. This is why there can't be transformation in society without dialogue, Fr. Njoroge quipped. He added that Tangaza will produce transformative graduates as she learns, practices and teaches the art and science of dialogue.

Speaking to recent events in the country, Rev. Njoroge talked about the phenomenon of Gen Z, whose complaint he said is that their presence and dreams have been ignored by older members of society, including their parents, the Church, the government and authority figures.

As a scholarly and transformative institution, Tangaza University should continue to intensify its engagement with the youth and their aspirations, he said. The Professor explained that the university is best placed to build excellent youth education programmes than any other university as she already has Youth Studies as a programme, a possible niche area.



He explained that many universities teach young people without creating specific curricula focusing on the reality of youth growing up and how to address their aspirations and dreams. Tangaza is global, the world is present here. This University subsumes the cosmos, and can thus build one of the broadest and strongest global alumni associations!



Taking pride in the identity of the University indicates that this institution will continue to build a strong alumni base. Alumni are persons bonded to their university after graduating the way we are attached to our families even after we have left home.

Rev Njoroge termed the Tangaza motto: Teaching Minds, Touching Hearts, Transforming Lives; memorable memorable and unforgettable, and therefore stood for mind, heart and life. These, he said, are at the centre of transformative education.

He additionally welcomed the Theological Faculty's presence and praxis at Tangaza as vital because, Theology, he explained, far from being a hindrance to true knowledge and research, acts as an inspiration to the growth of other branches of knowledge, in both the humanities and the sciences.

The professor concluded by explaining that tangaza, a Kiswahili word which means “to proclaim”- to exercise Kerygma, and so Tangaza University, has a proclamation to make to Kenya, to Africa and to the world!

He asked for God's blessings on the university for the new academic year and semester through the intercession of the Servant of God Maurice Cardinal Otunga.



## Tangaza Urged to Strive for Honour

“The world needs people who can stand and strive for honour.”

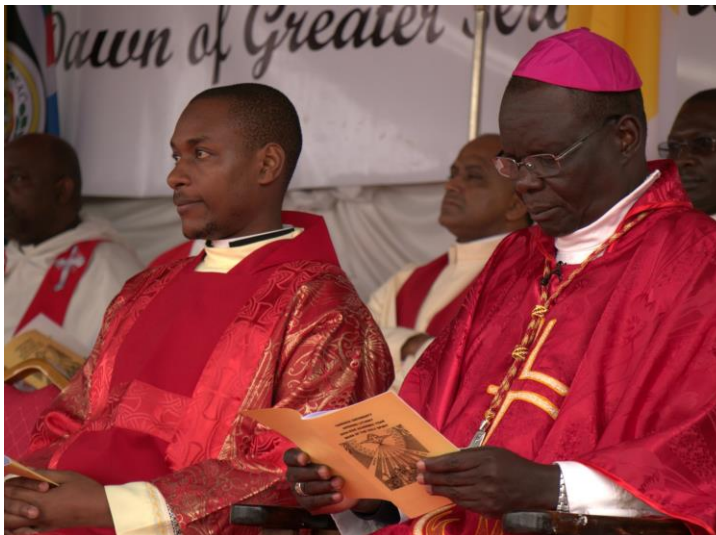
These are words by His Grace, Archbishop Raphael Wokorach MCCJ, during the Inaugural convocation of the Tangaza University academic year 2024/2025. The Archbishop, who was the main Celebrant and Homilist for the Mass heads the Archdiocese of Gulu in Uganda.

The Archbishop for whom coming to Tangaza was a kind of homecoming, studied at the then Tangaza College in the 80’s and was the first generation of Tangaza students and later alumni.

His Grace described the charter award to the university as a historic moment, saying that Tangaza is opening doors. Likening this to the gospel from John, which he said puts it into context by the encounter with the Resurrected and Risen Christ.

Calling it a moment of enriching renewal, and God rolling the stone away, from the tomb, Most Rev. Wokorach called the elevation of Tangaza a time of restoration and peace. He prayed that peace may be at the university and unlock all that she needs.

Saying that the word of God should be in the center of all that we do, and in how we relate to one another in the purpose of peace, the Prelate blamed social issues and social violence, gender differences on lack of Christ’s presence in our lives.



In his address to the gathering after the Mass, the Archbishop told those gathered that honour should define their dignity as who they are, and what they do in life. Saying that the world needs people who can stand and strive for honour, His Grace reminded the Tangaza fraternity that the founders of the university wanted servants for the church. The university, he said trains servant leaders like Christ Himself.

He reminded them that Jesus, being the Son of God, washed the feet of His disciples, and asked them to do the same. Bishop Wokorach asked those who graduate from Tangaza to emulate Christ.

The Prelate advised Tangaza graduates to avoid pride because it stops people from being servants. The Gospel, he said, teaches us to be leaders, but leaders who are servants. This will in turn make Tangaza different from other universities.



## Tangaza Comes of Age

Tangaza opened its doors to new and returning students as a university one week ago.

The convocation, that started with Holy Mass, opened a new year themed Tangaza University: *Celebrating a New Dawn For Greater Service to Church and Society*.

Among those who graced the occasion were Most Rev. Raphael p'Mony Wokorach, MCCJ the Archbishop of Gulu, Sponsors of Tangaza University, the Tangaza University, Chancellor, Fr. Edward Etengu, OSB, Chair of the Trustees Dr. Edward Odundo and the Trustees, Dr. George Muhoho, Chair of the Tangaza University Council, Rev. Edward Mushi, AJ Rector, Apostles of Jesus Theologicum, Rev. Dr. Deogratias Rwezaura, SJ Principal, Hekima College, and Very Rev. Prof. Immanuel FORO, SJ, Director Chemi Chemi ya Uzima College (AOSK).

The occasion also saw two important launches; one, that of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030, and the launch of the fundraising for the building of the Students Centre and the Resource Centre at the Karen Campus.







