

SPEECH BY THE ACTING VICE CHANCELLOR, PROF. JOSEPH BOSIRE, DURING THE UNIVERSITY PRAYER DAY HELD ON TUESDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2019 AT THE GRADUATION SQUARE

- Bishop Emeritus, Dr. Bonifes Adoyo, Christ is the Answer Ministries,
- Members of Council,
- University Management Board members,
- Members of Senate,
- Students Executive Council,
- Staff,
- Students,
- Invited Guests,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

May I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this first ever University Prayer Day. I thank the Almighty God for giving me an opportunity to work for MMUST in an acting capacity as the Vice Chancellor. I thank the Council, members of staff, students, parents and guardians for the warm welcome given to me and providing an environment for me to discharge my duties. I am particularly grateful to members of staff who have continued to offer their services in spite of the change of Office. I am grateful to the student leadership, and the rest of the students in all our campuses, for remaining calm during the transition period.

It is unfortunate that I came in at a time when the University is going through hard times. Unprecedented levels of death among staff and students is evident in the loss Dr. Caroline Onyantha , the Academic Registrar, Dr. Bob Mbori, the Dean, School of Arts and Social Sciences and Prof. Yudah Ayodo, Deputy Principal, Kaimosi University College which is our constituent college, within three weeks. I am reliably informed that we lost twenty three students in the year 2018 and two are already reported dead in January of the year 2019. The need for cohesion among the bigger MMUST family has clearly presented itself. These challenges call for divine intervention that even as we

gather to thank the Almighty God for the grace he has given us over the years, we see the need to ask him to come through for us. We are well guided by 2nd Chronicles 7:14 that those of us, identified by his name, which I am sure MMUST is, when we turn to our God, repent of our shortcomings and call on his name, then the Almighty will hear us from heaven and heal our land. What we are experiencing surely requires a healing from above

I wish to thank the University Chaplaincy for being at the forefront in championing and organizing for this day. Indeed, this day comes at a time when we must all retreat and reflect on our lives and the decisions we need to make moving forward for the betterment not only of ourselves but also of the people around us. Therefore, we are here today to pray, to worship and to give praise to God and to ask Him to reign in Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. We are also gathered here to reconcile with one another and extend an olive branch to each and every member of the MMUST Community who feels aggrieved in one way or another.

In our day to day activities at the University, we have, many times, overstepped our boundaries, stepped on the toes of our colleagues, said hurtful words or engaged in harmful activities against one another. Some of us have felt less privileged than others, despised, overlooked and passed over in University processes yet many of us spend a considerable amount of our time at this University. Against such feelings of unfair treatment and disparities, it is almost impossible to joyfully wake up each day and enjoy working in such an environment. It is for this reason that we wish to call on each and every one of us to forgive one another and embrace our differences. We may have come from different backgrounds but let us remember that we are all citizens of this country called Kenya and the community called MMUST. To many of us, MMUST is our only source of livelihood. We, therefore, need to guard and jealously protect the peace and the well being of this institution. This we must do by striving to resolve our differences and returning to peace and harmony. Until we make good on our resolve to reconcile, we will be out of balance and we will suffer the consequences. It is noteworthy that your presence at this prayer today gives testimony that we are, indeed, desirous of pursuing peace and harmony within this precinct. I urge all of us to embrace

reconciliation as a gift we can and must give to others. It is a gift we can and must receive from others.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is important that we realize that, as a community, we are more similar than we are different. Each one of us is important in the system that is Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. None of us is an island of himself/herself. The teaching staff need the non-teaching staff. The professor needs the cleaner while the students need the lecturer to attain his/her career of choice. It is also true that the University administration needs the different MMUST Union Chapters and vice versa. We are all important parts of the wheel. Let us shun divisive institutional politics and bad practices that further divide us. Let us respect one another knowing that each one of us is rightfully here. Let us remember that building peace and reconciliation will not come from without us. It has to arise from the heart of this community. Let us remember that in reconciliation, we find the true value of family, friends and even in the ordinary things of life that all of us see and touch every day.

Ladies and gentlemen, attainment of genuine reconciliation will usher in a conducive environment for us to move this University to a globally relevant and competitive one. When we work together great things are bound to happen; we will attract quality staff locally and internationally, local and international institutional and industrial linkages and collaborations will be forged, prospective students will desire to join MMUST in view of the competitive advantage we will create and MMUST will be a University endowed with globally relevant talent that will feed into creating a vibrant research and innovation that would power high economic growth in our Kenya. In turn, MMUST will become a global leader whose footprints will be followed by other institutions.

Let us, therefore, look beyond our differences and focus on the beauty found in diversity, the strength found in numbers and the fulfillment found in working together. I pray that God will bless us this day and the days to come. I pray that love and respect for one another will blossom in our hearts. I pray that MMUST will be blessed by our being in this University at such a time as this.

We are grateful to members of the clergy and the churches around for coming in large numbers to help us carry this burden to the Almighty. I encourage us to turn to God, rededicate ourselves afresh and ask Him to have mercy upon us. Once more, I thank all of us for turning up in large numbers to pray. As we get deep into the engagements of the year 2019, it is my prayer that God will protect us and give us the strength and the will to work for him and our great nations to his own glory.

Thank you and May God bless us all

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