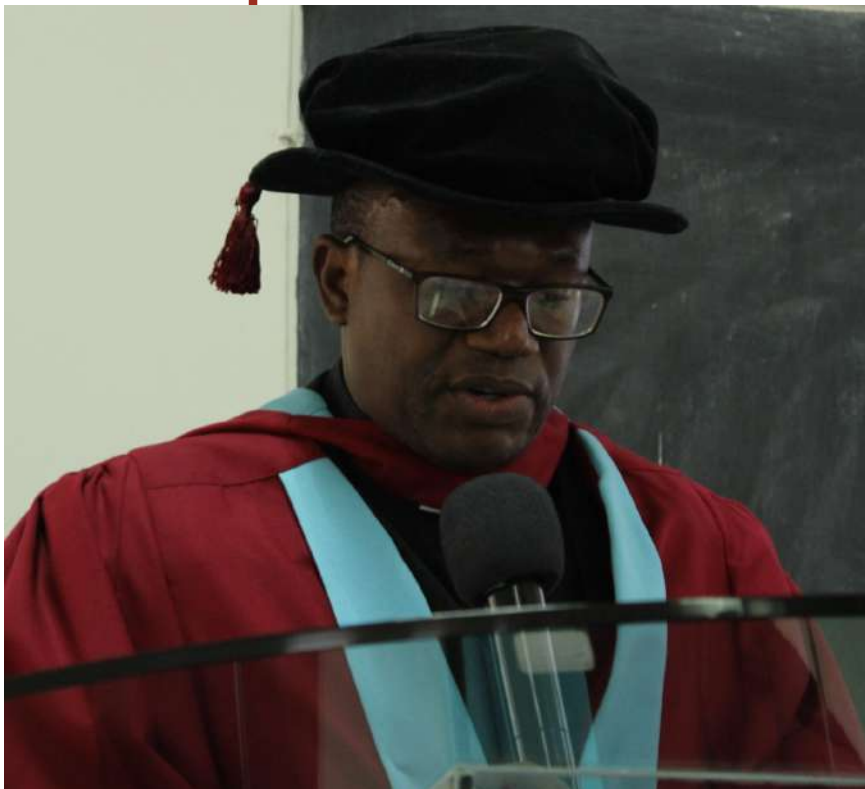


HUC Principal welcomes new students

August-December 2022



Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakewanlan SJ
HUC Principal

The Principal, Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakewanlan, S.J. welcomed the new students with very cordial words, emphasizing the importance of solidarity and hard work in life and especially at Hekima. In addition, he enjoined on all, the task of making HUC our home during the time that we are here. Dr. John-Okoria concluded with words of encouragement, and thanked all the students and their religious superiors for making HUC their first choice for Theological studies.

JCAM President Declares Academic Year 2022-2023 Officially Opened



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Hekima Newsletter

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The Director's Corner

JuneJulyAugust!

– The Summer Months of the Year

Many years ago, one Jesuit university community rector said to the students before the *Summer* break: 3 months offered to you are certainly not for vacation, but well calculated to benefit all that you are about in the University.

With that in mind, most of our people in academic institutions spend 2 months in the *Summer* doing research work and writing; 10 days of travels and home visits, 10 days of holidays and 8 days of retreat. This is typical for very many people.

The *Summer* months are also a time when most of our younger students take Language courses or undertake Field works, or do an Apprenticeship or Internship. The way in which the *Summer* is broken down depends on each person indeed. But all in all, it is an extremely important and precious time.

And when the weeks advance into months and gather momentum, we can then examine, in the manner and language of St. Ignatius, in order to gain an awareness of where we are at, in the course of the *Summer*.

No matter where we spend the *Summer*, part of it is hectic, not at all boring, but in the end nevertheless refreshing.

For the HUC Library, this *Summer* has been for stocktaking, re-shelving, partly for staff home leave and a total shutdown.

Welcome then to the *Summer* issue of the Newsletter.

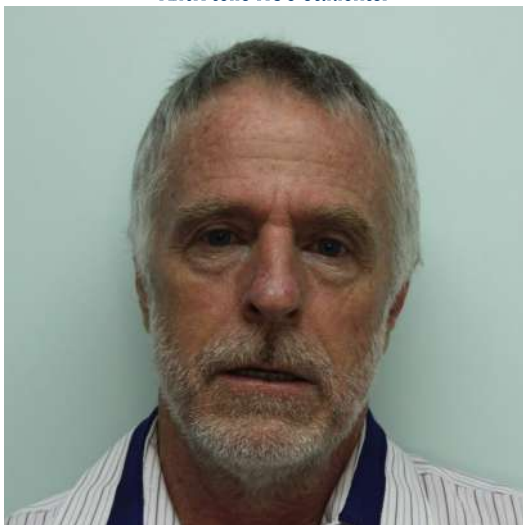
Read on! Read all!

Prof. (hons.) Chukwuemeka Orji, S.J.

Director of Communications

HUC

“Discipline and time management are key components in the quest for academic excellence,” Prof. Peter Knox tells HUC students.



Rev. Prof. Peter Knox SJ

Deputy Principal of Academic Affairs

Rev. Prof. Peter Knox, the Deputy Principal for Academic Affairs (DPAA) at Hekima University College has underscored the importance of discipline and time management as key components in the quest for academic excellence, which the institution strives for.

Speaking during the orientation ceremony for first year students at the beginning of this academic year 2022-2023, Prof Knox told the students that Hekima being part of the International Association of Jesuit Universities, shares the Jesuit Ignatian charism of academic excellence.

“Academic excellence does not mean that we all get ‘A’ grades in all our degrees; what we mean by academic excellence is a situation where we try to expand our vision of the world, we try to understand more the questions of

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JCAM President Declares Academic Year 2022-2023 Officially Opened



Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator SJ, JCAM President speaking during the inauguration of HUC Academic Year 2022-2023.

The president of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar, Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator SJ, on 13th August 2023 declared the 39th Academic Year 2022-2023 of Hekima University College officially open.

At the event, Fr. Orobator congratulated the three individuals who received honorary academic awards at the inauguration ceremony which took place at the post graduate campus in Nairobi. The three who were honored included the keynote speaker of the day, Prof. Susan Wood, SCL; Prof. Chukwuemeka Orji, SJ and Rt. Rev. Prof. Rodrigo Mejia, Bishop Emeritus of the Catholic Vicariate of Soddo-Hosana, in

Ethiopia.

Speaking of Prof. Wood, whom he referred to as a colleague, friend, and teacher, Fr. Orobator said, “Her distinction, contribution and outstanding scholarship is for us today a grace and we are honored that you could share that with us, thank you.”

Prof. Chukwuemeka, the JCAM President said, is not a stranger to Hekima University College; Fr. Orobator said that Fr. Chuk is not just a spectator but someone who has devoted his energy, time and effort to the mission of the Society of Jesus as embodied in this institution.

Fr. Orobator also commented on

(Continued on page 9)

Current international crisis an opportunity

Dean of HIPSIR

Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa SJ, Dean of Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR) has stated that the current international crisis – among these, the mushrooming conflicts, the trumpets of war sounding across the globe, and disasters of climate change experienced worldwide – must be seen as an opportunity.

“For us committed to peacebuilding and harmonious international relations, this is not the time to be discouraged or shy away from the challenge; neither is it time to contend ourselves with idealistic words of peace without deeds but rather we require a vision of peace that can adequately pro-

vide a clear direction for our efforts,” Dr. Rutagambwa explained.

He observed that for the last 18 years, HIPSIR has trained energetic and passionate scholars and peace makers who are now engaged in different sectors and positions and are making a difference in the society.



Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa SJ
Dean of HIPSIR

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 3)

our times. Academic excellence also means that we follow the rules of academia; we acknowledge our sources; plagiarism at Hekima is regarded as a major crime. At the same time we try to combine spirituality and academia,” Prof. Knox explained.

He urged the students to be disciplined in their work and try as much as possible to manage their time well. “Don’t think that you can study an entire semester in the last week before the exam, which is the study break; use your time wisely.”

He pointed out that the former Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Father Adolfo Nicolás, SJ had a particular phrase, “the globalization superficiality,” which means you just study things on the surface, you encounter life on

the surface.

“Father Nicolás, SJ is encouraging us to go into depth, in spirituality, in our academic work, go in depth, don’t just scratch the surface enough to get you through the exams, you want to grow deeply, therefore don’t allow this mentality of global superficiality to govern your life,” he advised.

While thanking the first years for choosing to come to Hekima, Prof. Knox said that as part of the International Jesuit Universities, Hekima University College tries to form men and women for others.

“We are not trying to form ourselves for our own wealth, neither are we trying to make ourselves more brilliant, but rather we are trying to train people for service, we are trying to train people for ministry within and outside the Church. Our context in Africa will

influence the way we are going to form you.”

He further explained that the teaching context at Hekima is influenced by the fact that we are a multi-faith continent, it is not just Christians or Catholics; there are people who follow no religion, there are others who belong to African traditional religion as well as people who follow other religions.

“Our context therefore is not one of uniformity; the politics here in Kenya, Nigeria, or anywhere else we come from, has no uniformity. We therefore have to learn to speak, to dialogue, so that we will be able to have discourse with people different from us, without losing our own identity and without trying in any way to suppress or change their identities.”

✍️ *By Pamela Adinda*

(Continued from page 4)

“Thanks to our competitive program, a devoted and able faculty, a unique pedagogy rooted in Christian values and the Jesuit Education Tradition that puts the student at the center, and labors to make them achieve the full potential of their integral development. HIPSIR has taken the lead in training hundreds of students in responding to the challenge that confronted our Eastern African Region, the whole continent of Africa and beyond,” he remarked.

He also argued that despite the dire condition of the Covid-19 pandemic, the institution was gratified by the graduation of seven students last year.

“Eleven others have completed their thesis and are due to graduate this coming October. These students faced unprecedented dire situations which made their research challenging and at times almost impossible, nonetheless, they have testified to the benefits of hard work and the spirit of resilience which has guided them through the successful completion of their studies.”

As he welcomed Rev. Dr. Anthony Egan SJ who will take up the course of gender identity and politics in Africa, Dr. Rutagambwa said that six new stu-

dents have joined the program this academic year from different parts of Africa.

“We warmly welcome them in a special way and wish them a memorable stay in our university community. I am aware of your high expectations and I would like to assure you that you will never regret your academic experience at HIPSIR and the company of a great family.”

He further said that in addition to Hekima’s commitment to academic excellence, the institution’s precious scholarly resources, and her collaborations with sister Jesuit universities as well as the international experience enables HIPSIR to not only offer a high competitive program, but it indeed also provides a friendly university community and a conducive environment for studies.

“To the students in Theology, although we have two different programs, we have a common goal and the same methodology. You are always welcomed at HIPSIR, we not only conduct activities regarding teaching, we also have from time to time conferences, public forums and other kinds of engagements that would be complementary to your academic training here in Theology,” Dr. Rutagambwa offered.

✎By Pamela Adinda

Prepare for ministry to an informed Society - New JST Dean tells students -



Rev. Dr. Marcel Uwineza SJ
New HUC Dean of Theology

In his address to the students during the orientation for first year students at Hekima University College, the new Dean, Rev. Dr. Marcel Uwineza SJ shared a scenario from an elite parish in Kigali, Rwanda where parishioners told a priest who had just celebrated Mass for them to take them seriously. Based on the scenario, Dr. Uwineza informed the students that if what they are merely looking for is an ordination after the three year formation, then Hekima is not the place for them.

“If you are coming here to this place of theology, and all you are looking for at the end of your study is to be a deacon, I am sorry to tell you that it is wonderful but not sufficient. There are many mediocre priests out there and Hekima is not a place to associate them with,” Dr. Uwineza expressed.

“I speak to you as a former student of Hekima; the same applies to Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa, the Dean of HIPSIR and Dr. John-Okoria, the Principal. We all are products of this great institution, a sign to you that Hekima produces people who in the end also come back and teach.”

According to Dr. Uwineza, one of the common definitions of Theology is “faith seeking

(Continued on page 6)

CONFERRAL OF ACADEMIC HONORARY PROFESSORSHIP AWARDS

During the opening ceremony of the New Academic Year 2022-2023 three members of the HUC Faculty were awarded honorary Academic Professorship by the Hekima University College.

Prof. Susan Wood, SCL

is from the USA and teaches Systematic Theology at Regis College, University of Toronto Canada where she is the immediate past Dean. She is a religious Sister (Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, USA) and

Prof. Susan Wood (center) receiving honorary certificate from CUEA acting Vice Chancellor James Theuri. Looking on is Hekima Registrar Dr. Arlene Acosta (right)



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(Continued from page 5)

understanding, hope and love.’ He cited Dr. A. E. Orobator’s book, *Theology Brewed in an African Pot*, and he likened the faith-seeking quest to the story of Nicodemus in the Gospel of John 3 where Nicodemus approached Christ to help him understand how he, an old man can be ‘born again.’

“‘Jesus as you know in that Gospel of John, Jesus takes him in a long discourse and probably Nicodemus even goes away confused. But I want to believe that in the course of the journey with Jesus, that Pharisee was converted because half way through the Gospel of John, Nicodemus is among those defending Jesus before the Sanhedrin when he asked ...*does our law condemn anyone before listening to him?*” (Jn. 7:51).

Dr. Uwineza illustrated the Theology definition of ‘faith seeking hope’ with the New Testament story of the mother of the two sons of Zebedee who approached Jesus to have one of her sons sit at the right and the other at the left side of Jesus.

“A possible interpretations of that passage is that actually the woman was asking for what they can hope for in Jesus, what her sons can hope for.

One of the questions that the German philosopher, Emmanuel Kant asked was, what can we hope for in this life? We therefore should not be too quick to criticize the mother of the two sons of Zebedee as her request was a question of hope at the heart of Theology or if you want to be more precise, the study of eschatology,” Dr. Uwineza explained.

Finally to the definition of Theology as ‘faith seeking love,’ the Dean likened this to the New Testament story of the rich young man who came to Jesus and asked what he could do to inherit the Kingdom of God, to which Jesus told him to go and sell whatever he had and come and follow him.

“The man went away sad despite the fact that he had fulfilled all the commandments because he was still not in love with the giver of all that he had, God.”

The Dean therefore informed the new Theology students that as they begin their journey at Hekima, they are undertaking a discourse on mystery that will hopefully lead them to understanding hope and love. He told them that Hekima is a place of academic integrity where their religious life, and aspirations go together with their moral life.

“As a warning in an era of clericalism, let me reiterate the fact that we have been called and perhaps set apart, if we want it that way, but remember, we are not set above. There are many wonderful lay people out there who are way better than us, therefore we are set apart but not set above. Therefore as we enter into this academic journey, just remember that we are in this together,” he advised.

“Welcome to Hekima and make it your academic home and family. May your study of theology touch your mind and heart,” the dean said as gave the following inspiration advise to the students and faculty:

"There is a danger that the knowledge of theology and scripture may pass from the minds of professors into the minds of students without passing through the hearts of either. Unless it finds a place in their hearts, the message of the gospel may be preached, but it is not going to be lived," Thomas Keating, a Trappist Monk.

✞ By Pamela Adinda

(Continued from page 6)

taught Theology Courses at Marquette University, holds so many academic titles; Chair of the Department of Theology; Professor at St. John's University, Collegeville (MN); University of Tübingen Katholische-Theologische Fakultät, Germany; Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome; University of Notre Dame; and St. Mary College. She published, co-authored and edited numerous articles and books. As the Guest Speaker, she delivered the excellent inaugural speech for this academic year: "Pope Francis' vision for the Church."

Prof. (hons.) Chukwuemeka Orji, S.J.

is from Nigeria and teaches the Old Testament, Biblical Hebrew and Biblical Archaeology. Presently he is the Head of Department of the HUC Library and also Director of the Communications Center; the first of the HUC Alumni who joined the Faculty at the completion of his long studies (in 1998). He also taught at the Jesuit Fran-

JCAM President Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, S.J., receives honorary award certificate on behalf of Rev. Prof. Rodrigo Mejía, S.J. from CUEA Acting Vice Chancellor James Theuri



Prof. Rodrigo Mejía, S.J.

is Colombian, the Bishop Emeritus of the Vicariate of Soddo (Hosana), Ethiopia.

He was one of the early lecturers and founding Fathers of HUC (in 1984). He taught Spirituality, Pastoral Theology, Systematic Theology and Liberation Theology. Former Rector at the Jesuit School of Philosophy in Kinshasa; and former Provincial of the Eastern Africa Province. Presently he is the Jesuit Tertianship Director in Mwangaza, Nairobi. He recently completed his tenure as the Chairman of the HUC Council.

His award was received on his behalf by the JCAM President, Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, S.J., who also read out to the attending audience the written acceptance message of Bishop Rodrigo, S.J., congratulated the recipients, and finally declared the Academic year 2022-2023 opened, as the Chairman of the Board of

(Continued on page 8)

cophone Theological Faculty in Abidjan. "The Rabbi" Fr. Chukwuemeka has served in various offices among others, as Spiritual Father, as Registrar, Director of Pastoral Fieldwork; Director of Apostolates and lately as Chaplain. He was also the Director of the Biblical Apostolate Seminars (1999-2005) offered by HUC and designed for the Lay people from all over Nairobi; Editor in Chief of the African Jesuit Assistency Journal (*Africa Yetu*). He fluently speaks well over a dozen languages. He had been a translator for the Jesuit Provinc

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(hons.) Prof. Chukwuemeka Orji SJ receiving his honorary certificate from CUEA Acting Vice Chancellor James Theuri

“News of this award received with joy and surprise,” - Bishop Rodrigo Mejía, SJ

Bishop Emeritus of Soddo-Hosana, Rt. Rev. Prof Rodrigo Mejía SJ has revealed that he received with surprise and joy from Hekima University College Principal, Rev. John-Okoria, the notification of the academic award granted him as Professor Emeritus of Hekima University College.

In a message read on his behalf by Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator SJ, Bishop Rodrigo explained that his joy was the acknowledgment to his commitment and love for Hekima since its foundation in 1985.

“It is deeply human to feel recognized even if my



JCAM President Very Rev. Dr. Orobator SJ who delivered acceptance message on behalf of Prof Rodrigo.

contribution is so insignificant compared to the great work of many other Jesuits. I can only claim the grace received from the Lord of being the on-

ly member of this Eastern Africa Province still surviving among the founding members of Hekima and still being able occasionally to give some

humble service,” the Bishop expressed.

The award is a surprise because he never expected this remarkable honor, a unique event in the history of Hekima.

“As Jesuits, we are formed in the spirit of St. Ignatius of Loyola to work for the Lord “without expecting any other recompense and to know that what we are doing is the Holy will of God,” he explained.

While expressing his gratitude, Bishop Rodrigo said that he continues to pray for the staff and students of Hekima family, and also for the success of this Academic Year 2022-2023.



Rt. Rev. Prof Rodrigo Mejía, SJ

(Continued from page 7)

Governors of HUC.

The recipients were praised (by the MC, Prof. Peter Knox, S.J.) in their respective works. Prof. Wood is extraordinarily gifted in her many publications, lectures, offices held and travels undertaken. Prof. Mejia who is multi-talented, writes a Theology pastorally at the reach of the common people. Prof. Orji is noted for his academic rigor and research (thanks to his knowledge of many languages and first university studies as an Engineer), as well as many works of publication.

The CUEA Rector /Vice Chancellor, Very Rev. Prof. Stephen Mbugua Ngari, not in the country at the time, was represented by his Acting Vice Chancellor – James Theuri, who handed the Awards to each of the three recipients, with the assistance of the HUC Academic Registrar, Madam Dr. Arlene Acosta.

The Principal, Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakewanlan, S.J. had already presented to the Academic Board of HUC the three recipients who were unanimously approved by the Board to receive the Awards.



Staff and Students listening to the speech delivered by Prof. Susan Wood, SCL at the inauguration

(Continued from page 3)

the death of Prof. Laurenti Magesa which occurred on the 11th of August in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. He described the late Don as a colleague who has served Hekima University College with equal distinction, dedication and devotion.

“Many of you would remember him because he taught here for over a decade. Not only did he teach here,

Meanwhile, he reminded everyone who had gathered for the occasion that the entire Church is in a Synodal process, leading to the convocation of the Synod on Synodality. Fr. Orobator explained that the process is called synodal because it is not a one-off event but rather a way of being the community of the disciples of the risen Christ. He invited the Hekima University College faculty, administrators

listening, being missionaries, participation, and communion.”

“I am happy to note that some of Hekima faculty members have been part of other initiatives, which in a way promote the spirit of synodality. Amongst those we have Marcel Uwineza, SJ, Anthony Egan, SJ, Veronica J. Rop, ASE and of course the late Laurenti Magesa who have contributed to the publication of **“A Pocket Companion to Synodality: Voices from Africa.”**



Concelebrating Priests at the Inauguration Mass for the Academic year 2022-2023

he lived here; and so I would like to invite each and every one to observe a moment of silence in his honor, in his memory, and in gratitude to God for his life; may his soul rest in peace.”

and students therefore be part of the activity.

“The synodal document invites us to form ourselves in synodality, because we cannot take it for granted that we understand what it means to be a synodal Church. It takes conversion, dialogue, accompaniment,

Fr. Orobator said that to the best of his knowledge, the publication, which was distributed to all HUC student and faculty members courtesy of the African Synodality Initiative based at JCAM Secretariat in Nairobi, is the only resource of its kind that simply introduces the idea of synodality from an African perspective and invites conversation and dialogue about synodality.

✞By Pamela Adinda



Hekima University College Principal
Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakewanlan, S.J

Hekima – Wisdom

For the sake of our non-Kiswahili speaking new members present here, the word Hekima means wisdom; and this is what brings us all here, seeking to enrich our knowledge and gain more Hekima.

Which wisdom?

And now the question is what wisdom are we seeking? What is this Hekima that we are all diligently looking for? It is not your conventional wisdom. It is not a question of who is first or who is the smartest or whatever we may normally consider wisdom to be. The Hekima that we seek here is God's wisdom.

The first shall be last, and the last shall be first

As we hear in today's Gospel, God's wisdom is not about who is first. As I reflect on this parable in Matthew, I see a setting that is very familiar to me from my own childhood. **The example of job seekers on a main street in Benin-City, Nigeria**, fits today's parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

The wisdom of the landowner was not so much to ensure that everyone worked for the same number of hours, as rather to make sure that no family went home hungry.

A denarius was the basic subsistence

with which a man fed his family for one day. In going against the conventional wisdom that those who work more should earn more, the key for understanding the parable is ultimately found in the concluding line of the text: *the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.*

Divine providence as boundless generosity.

If we rely uniquely on our own effort, or on conventional wisdom alone, we may not allow room for Grace. The one last hired would be more aware of that Grace which made it possible for him to receive the minimum wage, the denarius. If God's gift to us was an exact payment for what we have done, then it would not be Grace.

The top student in Class

Boundless generosity is the image of God that today's parable offers us. The student who is first in memorizing the class notes might be last in the Grace of generosity. God is calling us to live together with a generous spirit.

Not rivalries in the group but be in solidarity with all

That Hekima or wisdom is not attained through the rivalry of the early laborers (comparing ourselves to other people). A people of wisdom (of Hekima) should not see themselves as rivals, be it in the classroom or in the community/ family. We are rather invited to a solidarity that the earlier workers were called to have for their fellow worker who would otherwise have gone home hungry.

“Abundant life” as a principle of African Theology – Tribute to Prof. Laurenti Magesa

Last week Saturday, at our inauguration, we heard from Fr. Orobator about the

African principle of “abundant life” as Prof. Magesa's signature contribution to African theology. We cannot continue to claim that African principle if so many Africans still go to bed hungry every night while others are swimming in abundance.

“the miracle of cooperation” –

a Vision of Pope Francis

– Prof. Susan Wood, SCL

At the same inauguration ceremony, Prof. Susan Wood, SCL delivered an excellent lecture on the vision of Pope Francis for us as a Church – one of a people marked by solidarity. The Pope has described this in the past as “the miracle of cooperation.” Truly God's Grace and Hekima abound when we work and study together in cooperation – in solidarity.

New assessment method – the Educationist!

As an educationist, I hope one day we will operationalize a system of education, particularly of assessment, where it is not the individual that passes or fails, but the whole class passes/fails.

not how much I can get, but how much I can give Until then, I enjoin us to begin this academic year by making cooperation and solidarity our guide in this journey called Hekima or wisdom. Beyond hard work and smartness, which are very important, we need God's Grace to achieve Hekima. Let us be confident in that Grace. We ask for the intercession of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom – to help us seek *not how much I can get, but how much I can give*. May God give each of us the Grace that each one and all of us need this academic year. Asanteni sana – and may God bless us all in the name of Jesus!

Hekima Pays Tribute to the “Giant of African Theology”



The late Rev. Prof. Laurenti Magesa, taught at Hekima University College for more than twelve years. Not only did he teach but lived with the Jesuits at some point, for several years – though not a Jesuit himself.

The President of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar, Very Rev. Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator

SJ while preaching at Hekima University College Academic Year inauguration Mass said that “Thank God, many of us in this chapel were privileged to see and witness what a virtuous life looks like and what a good Christian looks like in the person of Laurenti Magesa.”

Fr. Orobator last met Magesa on his 76th birthday at Aga Khan Hospital in

Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. This was the day before his death on Thursday, 11 August, 2022. In his tribute sent out to collaborators and friends of Fr. Magesa and which was also read at the funeral, Fr. Orobator said that the pancreatic cancer that finally ended Magesa's earthly life had taken a devastating toll on his body; however he remained the humble and amiable Christian that he always was.

“As we gathered around his bed and expressed our emotions of sadness and grief, Magesa muttered, ‘don’t do that ... suffering and death are a part of life.’” Orobator pointed out that Magesa’s imminent death did not rob him of his graciousness, warmth and respect for people.

The JCAM President first met Magesa in Musoma in 2004, where he was

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doing pastoral ministry in a rural parish. He later read a manuscript of Fr. Magesa, being prepared for publication, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (Orbis, 2004).

“The significance of that book was unmistakable: Magesa had written the magna carta of African theology of Inculturation. The combination of his penetrating insight, engaging originality and evidence-based analysis redefined the meaning, significance and practice of inculturation.”

Orobator confessed that Magesa who respected his students and always made a point to remind them that he, too, was a learner, practiced the art of theologizing with grace, candor and integrity. He further described Magesa as a man of humble demeanor who was not given to self-aggrandizement. “His thinking was always lucid, original and inspiring. He provoked constructive thinking and shunned ideological controversies and intellectual artificiality aimed

at damaging the reputation of his trade or the position of those who held a contrary view.”

Meanwhile, the Dean of Theology at Hekima University College, Rev. Dr. M a r c e l

Uwineza SJ said that he owes what he is today to Father Magesa. “I became what I am today at HUC, mostly by the influence of this man whom we are mourning. He was not just a mentor but someone from whose life and professionalism, I learned a lot.”

The Hekima Jesuit Community Minister, Fr. Angelo Albertine, SJ, who was a student of Magesa at Hekima described him as keen on details and very thorough. “He was my academic advisor and at one point I presented to him a paper which I had done in a haste; the paper therefore had a number of mistakes including the spelling of my own country Madagascar which missed one letter; this did not escape the keen eyes of Fr. Magesa. This incident made me realize that he was one of those lecturers whom you could depend on for academic excellence.”

For Rev. Fr. Cyrus Mwangi SJ, a former student of Magesa who currently teaches at Hekima, the late Don was a good friend and a people’s person. “Fr. Magesa related



A section of Hekima staff who attended Prof. Magesa’s funeral participating in the burial ceremony

well with everyone regardless of their status in the society. He was a kind of person who would give audience to anyone who needed his attention; apart from that, his humility and receptive nature especially with the poor people was something many of us need to embrace. His death can only be termed as untimely.”

The Eucharistic Celebration on Saturday 13 August at the opening of the Academic Year 2022-2023, was dedicated to the repose of the soul of Prof. Magesa. At the same time, a condolence book was opened for students, faculty members and staff to write their tributes. The book was later presented to the family of the deceased at the funeral.

He was buried in his home diocese Musoma, northern Tanzania on Friday 19 August. Hekima University College was represented by a team of ten individuals including the Rector, Rev. Dr. Deogratias Rwezaura SJ, the HIPSIR Dean, Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa SJ, and the Dean of JST, Rev. Dr. Marcel Uwineza, SJ among others.

✠By Pamela Adinda.



OBITUARY

Laurenti Magesa*

A giant of African theology, he rose from humble origins to become an exemplary teacher, whose insight, originality and analysis redefined the meaning, significance and practice of inculturation

AGBONKHIANMEGHE E. OROBATOR

L Laurenti Magesa, one of Africa's greatest theologians, died on 11 August. To many, Magesa was a father (*Baba*) and grandfather (*Babu*); a friend and a mentor; a brother and a teacher. In some African cultures, towering personalities are likened to a giant tree in the forest. Their demise is aptly expressed with the metaphor of a fallen tree. A Jesuit colleague announced Magesa's death with the words: "Our brother, friend and priest, and giant of Africa has gone to the Lord." Magesa's pilgrimage from humble origins to global renown as one of the giants of African theology tells the story of a faithful pastor, humble scholar, beloved teacher and exemplary Christian.

I first met Magesa in Musoma, Tanzania in 2004, where he was doing pastoral ministry in a rural parish. His book *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (Orbis, 2004) was in preparation for publication. He gave me a galley proof to read. The significance of that book was instantaneous and unmistakable: Magesa had written the Magna Carta of African theology of inculturation. The combination of his penetrating insight, engaging originality and evidence-based analysis redefined the meaning, significance and practice of inculturation.

Magesa was born in Musoma, northern Tanzania in 1946. He attended primary school in Musoma and secondary and high school at St Mary's Seminary, Mwanza, Tanzania. He studied theology at Makerere University, Uganda before earning an MA and PhD from Saint Paul University, Ottawa and the University of Ottawa. From 1985 until 2000, he served as a parish priest in Catholic parishes in the diocese of Musoma.

Magesa authored, co-authored and co-edited several groundbreaking books, including *What Is Not Sacred? African Spirituality* (Orbis, 2013), in which he brilliantly

explored the beauty of the spirituality of African religion and its enduring gift to Christianity as a light, not a shadow, as it had tended to be portrayed by those who were either ignorant or biased against its true nature. Earlier, he had published the first comprehensive account of the moral theology of African religion, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Orbis, 1997). In his usual style, he developed a compelling narrative of the importance of life as understood in African religion, not only as a biological phenomenon, but more importantly as a moral category for making and evaluating public and private ethical choices and conduct.

The final work Magesa published was a contribution to *A Pocket Companion to Synodality: Voices from Africa* (African Synodality Initiative, 2022). In "Journeying Together in Service and Harmony: The African *Jamaa* as a Model for a Synodal Church", Magesa explored the meaning and practice of synodality from the cultural perspectives of Africa. He pointed out that "what is intended by the synod as a whole is unity in thought, word, and deed of all the faithful who as a body and beyond the purpose of *jamaa* – which is primarily social self-preservation – are on the road toward the objective of their salvation and the redemption of humankind."

Magesa was a consummate learner and a compassionate teacher. Starting in the late 1970s and continuing for many years, he taught theology at various institutions, including Kipalapala Major Seminary, Tabora, Tanzania; Tangaza University College and Maryknoll Institute of African Studies – both in Nairobi, Kenya. He was a pioneer lecturer at the then Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA), Nairobi, which later became the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). From 2009 to 2021, he lived and taught theology at the Jesuit School of Theology, Hekima University College, Nairo-

bi.

His professional career as a theologian also took him to several institutions as a visiting scholar and fellow, notably the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University in the United States; Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham, United Kingdom; Maryknoll School of Theology in New York; the Xavier University at Cincinnati; the Jesuit Institute South Africa; and DePaul University in Chicago. The last of these awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2014.

Magesa practised the art of theologising with grace, candour and integrity. He respected his students and always made a point to remind them that he, too, was a learner. A man of humble demeanour, he was not given to self-aggrandisement. His thinking was always lucid, original and inspiring. He provoked constructive thinking and shunned ideological controversies and intellectual artificiality aimed at damaging the reputation of his trade or the position of those who held a contrary view.

Magesa's scholarship, research, writing and publications gave a distinctively African face to inculturation theologies, liberation theologies and Catholic theological ethics. Strikingly, he put his theological convictions, ideas and principles into action in his everyday living. During his teaching spell at Hekima University College, he created and led inculturated Eucharistic liturgies that drew on the best traditions and values of African cultures and religion in dialogue with the Gospel.

I last met Magesa on his seventy-sixth birthday, the day before his death, in the Aga Khan Hospital in Dar es Salaam. The pancreatic cancer that finally ended his earthly life had taken a devastating toll on his body. Surrounded by his beloved brother and primary caregiver, Professor Evaristi Cornel-

(Continued on page 14)

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li Magoti of the University of Dar es Salaam, and his relatives, Magesa remained the humble and amiable Christian that he always was. As we gathered around his bed and expressed our emotions of sadness and grief, he muttered, "Don't do that ... this [suffering and death] is part of life." His imminent death did not rob him of his gra-

riousness, warmth and respect for people.

The belief is strong in many parts of Africa that the status of an ancestor is reserved for people who have made a transformative and enduring contribution of service to their community. By his life of service as a pastor, the depth of his scholarship and the example of his life as a Christian, Magesa now qualifies to join the ranks of the ancestors of the Church in Africa and the univer-

sal Church.

Laurenti Magesa, priest, theologian and teacher, born Musoma, Tanzania, 10 August 1946; died Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 11 August 2022.

Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator SJ is president of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar.

*Culled from *The Tablet* 20/27 August 2022

Hilton Hekima Sisters Scholar Program and Jesuit Center for Safeguarding in Africa Hold a Joint Graduation Ceremony

Hekima University College on Friday July 29 held a joint graduation ceremony for the first group of students who have been taking certificate courses from the Hilton Hekima Sisters Scholar Program (HHSSP) and Jesuit Center for Safeguarding in Africa (JCSA).

The ceremony was led by Rev. Prof Peter Knox, SJ, Hekima University College Deputy Principal Academic Affairs on behalf of the principal Rev. Dr. John-Okoria, SJ who was away at the time.

"At Hekima University College, we have a great sense of pride today that so many of you have followed our programs in both child safeguarding and in introductory Theology for the sisters all around the continent," Prof. Knox expressed adding

that some sisters joined the program from the United States of America, where they are currently based, bridging the differences in time zones. This he described as true commitment.

The Hilton Hekima Scholar Program offers an introduction to theology courses for spiritual and human development to religious women in Africa. The one-year course offers them opportunity to grow in their vocation and mission. This first graduation saw 122 nuns from different parts of Africa who belongs to different religious congregations being awarded certificates in a colorful ceremony that was held in blended mode.

Meanwhile, the Jesuit Center for Safeguarding in Africa offers a certificate course in child safeguarding. According to Mr. Kevin Ayuko Ochieng, the research coordinator at JCSA, the 64

individuals who graduated during the ceremony are from different cohorts who participated in the program between October 2021 and May 2022.

"We had "in person" classes for those staying in Nairobi who were able to attend and their program lasted for ten weeks. We also had virtual classes for participants who joined from other countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa and Zambia," Kevin explained adding that the virtual program was a crash course which lasted for two weeks.

The center is currently recruiting participants who are scheduled to begin the program at the beginning of this new semester. Hekima University College students in Theology have a choice to take the course as an elective.

✉By Pamela Adinda



Participants Laud Hekima University College Language Immersion Program

As the second summer holidays Language Immersion Program comes to an end, participants expressed gratitude as they recollect the rigorous two-month activity that they term beneficial.

At the closing ceremony led by HUC Communications Department Director, Prof. Chukwuemeka Orji, SJ, the four scholastics from Arrupe Jesuit University who participated in the program shared that their English Language skills, both spoken and written have immensely improved.

“The program has been enjoyable, interesting and fruitful beyond my expectations. It was wonderful to meet new people and make friends at Hekima,” expressed Alexis Nziyituriki, SJ, one of the four scholastics from Arrupe. He added that the facilities provided to aid in the learning process were quite sufficient and resourceful.

Moise Habonimana, SJ who revealed that previously, he was not comfortable expressing himself in English, said that the program has helped him to improve.

“I think that I have evolved and the credit to this positive change is not mine alone; I owe it to our able tutor, my colleagues with whom we were taking the program and the whole of Hekima fraternity. I got everything I needed and this greatly facilitated my learning process,” Moise expressed.

Both Alexis and Moise are from French speaking countries and

The four participants of Hekima University College Language Immersion Program from Arrupe Jesuit University with their tutor during one of the sessions at HUC Language Center in Nairobi



therefore needed the program to improve their knowledge of the English Language, which is the official teaching language at Arrupe Jesuit University, where they are currently studying Philosophy.

For Joao Portasio Xavier, SJ who is from a Portuguese speaking country, although the program was a bit rigorous, it was a great opportunity to improve his English skills.

“I underscore what my colleagues have said regarding our experience here. All I can add is my appreciation to all who have been there for us during this period. I am happy to have been part of this program which has helped me a lot. As we go back, I will surely miss this place and everyone we met here. My appreciation also goes to the community. We enjoyed the warmth and all the support that we needed,” Joao expressed.

Apart from appreciating the program organizers and the entire Hekima University College fraternity, Moniz Fernando Reiz, SJ from Mozambique where the official lan-

guage is Portuguese expressed that in his country, English language is taught in schools and many students only get the basic knowledge. It was only when he went to Zimbabwe for his Novitiate program that he was able to learn a little bit more. The program he said has helped him to improve his English and he is going back, more comfortable in the language.

Hekima University College Communications Department is making it a tradition to offer language immersion program, especially English Language for students coming from Non English speaking countries to help them improve in both their spoken and written English. The program is held during the Summer from June to August.

HUC Communications Department is therefore grateful to Arrupe Jesuit University for the collaboration which has enabled the program to continue.

✎By Pamela Adinda

JCAM President Inaugurates New Gate



Above: Very Rev. Dr. Orobator blessed the new gate at the Postgraduate Campus.

Below: Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa, Dean of HIPSIR tests his new biometric gate pass.



Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, S.J. President of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) on 6th April, 2022 blessed and officially opened the new gate, which has been constructed to enhance visibility of Hekima University Col-

lege Postgraduate Campus in Nairobi.

Previously the college's main entrance was located at a point not so visible to the public.

Speaking during the event, Hekima University College Chaplain Rev. Dr. James Campbell explained that although the event of inaugurating a new gate did not sound much, the new gate is a much more visible sign to those walking by or driving by the campus that Hekima University College is here.

“This new gate announces not only our presence as Hekima University College but also that we are witnesses to Christian and Catholic faith. This new gate announces the intellectual apostolate of the Society of Jesus and her engagement with the world and the Church through peace studies which perhaps we need now more than ever”, Rev. Campbell explained.

The ceremony began with the Eucharistic celebration led by Father Orobator, followed by a solemn blessing of the gate and its official opening. 📖

More than fifteen scholastics from Hekima University College ordained Deacons



Bishop Rodrigo Mejía ordaining one of the deaconate candidates Toky Donah, SJ at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Nairobi

Fifteen scholastics who cleared their three-years Bachelor of Theology Program at Hekima University College were on 26th February ordained deacons in a colorful ceremony which took place at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya. The ordained deacons include fourteen members of the Society of Jesus and a member of the Xaverian Missionaries of Yarumal.

The ceremony which was led by the Most Rev. Dr. Bishop Rodrigo Mejía, SJ. Vicar Apostolic Emeritus of Soddo, Ethiopia, was attended by among others, the President of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM), Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, Provincial of the North West Africa Province (ANW), Very Rev. Fr. Afiawari Chukwuyenum,

(Continued on page 24)

A delegate from Missio Aachen in Germany recently endorsed Hekima University College as a very important partner to their Missiological Institute, a department of Missio Aachen which does theological work by supporting post-graduate students in African countries.

Speaking during their visit to Hekima University College in Nairobi on January 26, Ms. Katja Heidemanns from Missio Aachen accompanied by other colleagues from the same organization said that Hekima has always been a very important theological partner to them. This is owing to the fact that there has been and continues to be a lot of exchange between staff from Hekima and Aachen staff members who are involved in research and theological work.

The delegation from Missio in Germany, which is part of the Global Network of Pontifical Mission Societies was in Nairobi, Kenya for a weeklong meeting with various partners as part of preparations for this year's World Mission Sunday Campaign.

"This year, our World Mission Sunday Campaign will focus on the challenges of pastoral work in urban settlements and we decided to focus on Nairobi. We are here for one week to meet partners and to learn from the work of the Church in the urban settlement areas, in the small Christian communities in the slums and we are very happy to be at Hekima University College today," Ms. Heidemanns commented.



Delegation from Missio Aachen with some Faculty Members at Hekima University College during their courtesy call to the institution

She further expressed that this year 2022, Missio is celebrating the 50th anniversary of their Missiological Institute, a collaborator of Hekima University College.

"For purposes of synergy, we have integrated our Missiological Institute to our projects as Missio in order to collaborate better and use the knowledge and wisdom of our colleagues for project work and collaboration with our partners," Ms. Heidemanns explained.

Commenting on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Missio programs, Ms. Heidemanns said that during the first year of the pandemic i.e. 2020, people were extremely happy to be in solidarity with the partners especially those living in places that were hard hit by the pandemic. However, the situation has now changed and the enthusiasm to contribute towards projects related to Covid-19 pandemic has died.

"After two years of the pandemic, people seem to have moved on and contributions towards Covid-19 projects no longer appeal to many. But during the first year of the pandemic, we did have some very touching acts of solidarity even among the parishes, where people were giving and collecting in their

own creative ways, for instance, selling cakes to raise funds which they sent to Missio because we had no Sunday worship services where we usually do our collections. We are glad that parishioners from various parts of Germany devised other ways to collect funds and supported us."

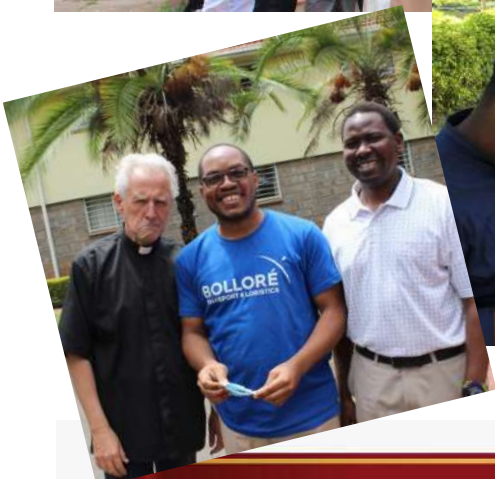
With Covid-19 pandemic now somewhat eased, Missio projects have been focusing on the emergency and health support. As Ms. Heidemanns pointed out, the pandemic did destabilize the lives of many people, the majority of whom lost their jobs and therefore had no income any more. As such, their focus has been on short term emergency and health projects. However, she is hopeful that the organization will soon be focusing on other programs including formation, which are long term projects.

During their visit to Hekima University College, the Missio delegation met with the Principal Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakwanlan, SJ and the Deputy Principal Academics Rev. Prof. Peter Knox, SJ among other faculty members.





Photo Gallery



Jesuit Centre for Safeguarding in Africa (JCSA) officially Inaugurated



Group Photo of students and faculty members who attended the inauguration ceremony lead by JCAM President Very Rev. Dr. Orobator

The Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) Safeguarding program on January 15 marked two important milestones; the first being the official opening of the Jesuit Centre for Safeguarding in Africa (JCSA) by the JCAM President Very Rev. Dr. Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator, S.J. The second was the launch of a resource book titled *Creating a Consistent Culture of Safeguarding in Church and Society: Perspectives from Africa* (eds. L. Daka & B. Mumbi Gikonyo. Nairobi 2022. ISBN: 978-9914-9962-1-0).

According to the JCAM Safeguarding Coordinator, Ms. Be-

atrice Mumbi, the opening of the Safeguarding Center at Hekima University College is a realization of a vision JCAM had two years ago.

“When we first started in 2019, we were offering child protection seminars to theology students at HUC only and later, we realized that there was a gap that needed to be filled in order to have greater impact,” This gap, Ms. Mumbi explained was the need to go beyond the walls of Hekima.

“We are happy to see this vision finally taking shape and will continue to work hard to ensure that the Centre delivers the mandate for which it was started – that is to be of service to the Church in Africa by generating knowledge and resources and growing skills in child safeguarding,” Ms. Mumbi said.

Rev. Dr. Joachim Zoundi, S.J., the di-

rector of JCSA explained that safeguarding of children and vulnerable persons has become part of the apostolate of the Catholic



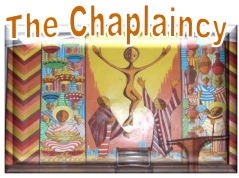
Church. The Center has therefore been created to help establish how best the Church in Africa can respond to the crisis of abuse of children and vulnerable adults.

Since April 2020 when it admitted the first group of participants which included both Theology students and lay people from parishes within the Archdiocese of Nairobi, the Jesuit Center for Safeguarding in Africa has been in operation.

Meanwhile, the resource book: *Creating a Consistent Culture of Safeguarding in Church and Society: Perspectives from Africa*

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A Reflection by HUC Chaplain: Guarded Under the Shadow of God's Wings

On a visit to Paris when I was young, one of the treats was a visit to the Eiffel Tower. Famous since it's construction for the World Exhibition, it has become one of the most famous landmarks in the world. Of course, I had seen photographs of it and television shots of it, so in many ways I was prepared to see it. However, nothing could really have prepared me for what I saw for myself, to look at it closely, to touch it, and to ascend the lift to the top to see the panorama of Paris laid out before my eyes.

My first surprise, even 'though I was familiar with it, was to see its color. I thought it would be sort of rusty, patchy in places and worn down by the weather and scratched. What I did not expect was the even milk chocolate coating which ran up and down its length with a uniform consistency and which gave it a mellower, warmer and softer appearance instead of it just being a huge rusty metal construction. However, what struck me most of all was the sheer size of the thing: it was enormous. Although I knew it was big, I had never seen anything so massive in my young life; it just took my breath away seeing its columns plunge into the earth and curving upwards, on and on until it narrowed and finally tapered into the blue sky above. A vast immovable structure making me and my friends feel somewhat insignificant beneath its shadow.

I mention this because it reminds me of another such reality, in this case the vastness of God. You see, it's all very well hearing about God from a pulpit but as in this case with my experience of the tower, there really is no substitute for a personal encounter with Him.


As I was left with a sense of awe at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, so too should we have a simi-



lar sense about being in the presence of God ourselves at every moment of our lives. God is there, watching over us, stepping in to help us when he thinks we need it or leaving us to ourselves to see how we get on without Him.

All of our lives, every moment of every day, are spent under the shadow of the towering figure of God whose presence fills the universe. Let us then not be afraid of anything or anyone and let us remind ourselves that God is there and to turn to Him to ask for help or simply to say thank you for all He has given and continues to give to us.

Rev Dr. James Campbell, S.J.

Chaplain, Hekima University College. 

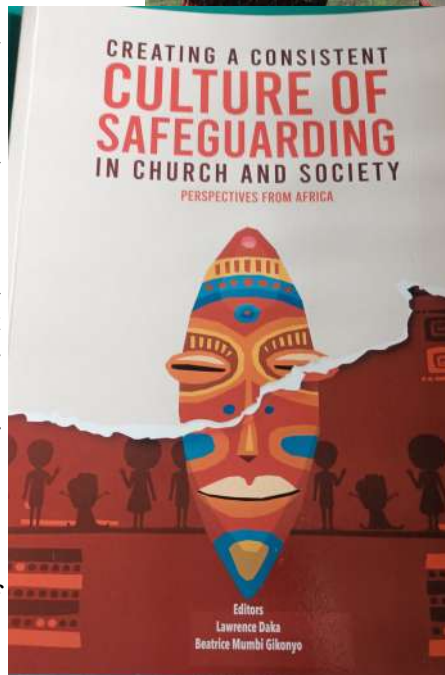
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which has been written by African scholars provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of child abuse; particularly sexual abuse in the context of Church and Society.

“This book is a must read for all of us as we are in one way or the other interested in the welfare of children in all spheres – in our work, at home and even in the larger society,” Ms. Mumbi said adding that JCSA is very grateful to their benefactors and collaborators who have made the achievement of these milestones a possibility.

“I would also like to thank in a special way, the management of Hekima University College for their support by hosting the Center. And to our president Fr. Orobator, these milestones are indeed a testimony of your support, wisdom and leadership,” Ms. Mumbi added.

At the event, the first group of students received their certificates of completion. According to JCSA di-



rector Father Zoundi, the center hopes to offer more opportunities in the future not only the formation of Safeguarding agents but also doing research in the area as well as listening and accompanying victims of abuse. This will be in addition to providing specific short-term formation to safeguarding experts. ©

Dr. Elias Opongo named to Board



Rev. Dr. Elias Opongo, SJ
HUC Deputy Principal for
Finance and Administration

Dr. Elias Opongo gets appointed to the Advisory Board of the Kroc Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, USA.

This is where he did his MA in International Peace Studies. The appointment provides an important opportunity for networking and collaboration with Hekima University College. ©

Globethics.net Explores

Possible Collaboration with HUC

On the 18th of February 2022 the Executive Director of the Swiss-based Globethics.net, a worldwide network of teachers and institutions striving to embed ethics in higher education, paid a courtesy visit to Hekima University College.

The Executive Director, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Obiora Francis Ike, met with the HUC Principal Rev. Dr. John-Okoria Ibhakewanlan SJ. to explore possible collaboration with HUC.

HIPSIR Honors the Late Prof. Omoka



Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa, SJ, Dean of HIPSIR Delivering a message at the event

Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR) conducted an Academic Memorial on March 17 to honor the life of Prof. Omoka Wanakayi, one of the veteran lecturers at the institution who passed on in July, 2021.

The event which was held in blended mode, both remotely and in person was attended by people whose lives have been impacted upon in one way or the other by the late professor. These included HIPSIR faculty members, students, alumni, family members and friends of Prof. Omoka.

In his opening speech dur-

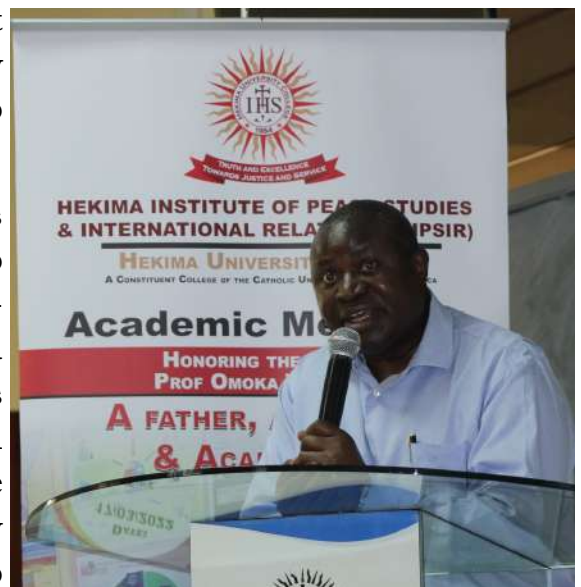
ing the event, HIPSIR Dean, Rev. Dr. Elisee Rutagambwa, SJ described Prof. Omoka as a great scholar, a humble and friendly man whose life touched anyone who had a chance to engage with him. Dr. Elisee further described the late Prof Omoka as a soft-spoken humble man,

who liked African tradition and wisdom, and who academically was incisive, a vigorous researcher, as well as a great teacher. He knew how to convert his knowledge aptly and paid attention to his students.

“As a mentor, he was a tireless listener who accompanied his students patiently and shared with them his wisdom and research skills. At the same time, he was a very critical mind who never allowed any mediocrity or compromised academic integrity,” Dr. Elisee said.

Dr. Elisee further revealed that while serving as a faculty member at HIPSIR,

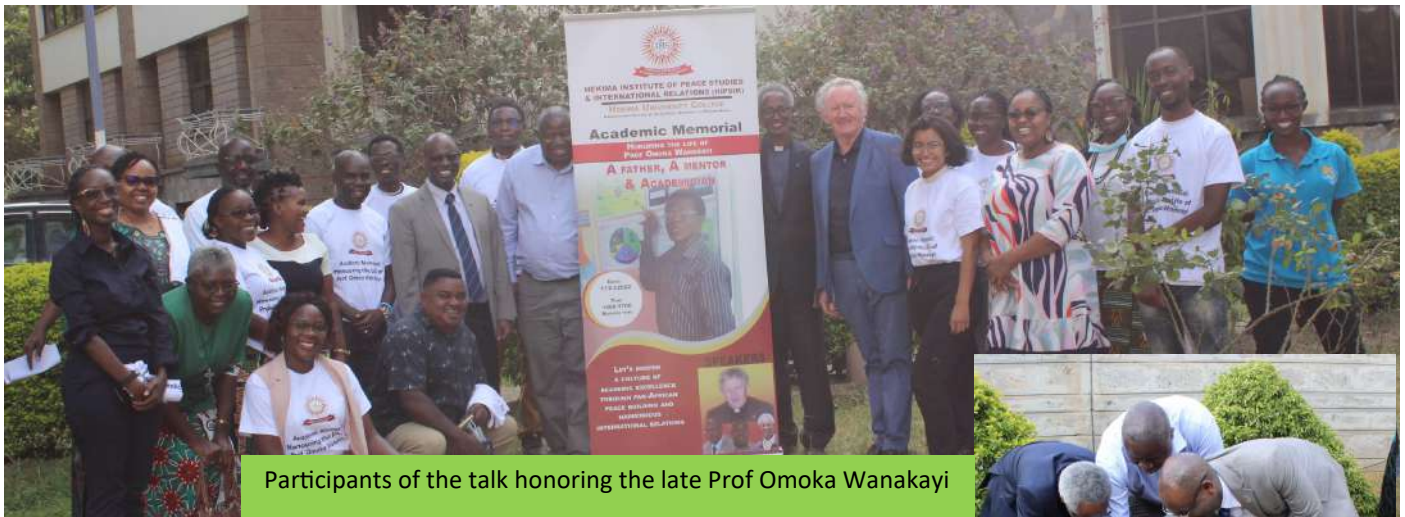
the late professor was a man dedicated to excellent scholarship and to the ideals of peace and harmonious international relations. “He trained hundreds of students who are now making a difference here in Kenya and across the entire African continent and beyond.” The late Prof Omoka liked HIPSIR in a special way and was eager to develop a strong and pertinent African scholarship that addresses African challenges.



Rev. Dr. Gaspar Sunwa, SJ, HIPSIR Faculty Member Addresses the participants at the occasion

Rev. Dr. Patrick Devine, International Chairman of Shalom Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconcilia-

(Continued on page 23)



Participants of the talk honoring the late Prof Omoka Wanakayi



Fr. Kifle, Fr. Gaspar and Fr. Elisee planting a tree in honor of Prof Omoka

(Continued from page 22)

tion who was the keynote speaker at the event said that he met the late Professor in 2007 and fifteen years down the line the countless good things that have happened to him are a mirage of the first day he walked into the doors of the peace institute and met Omoka. Dr. Devine pointed out that that first meeting with Prof Omoka informed his decision to join HIPSIR and that the late professor supervised his master's thesis – a wonderful experience.

“It dawned on me last year how the atmosphere of conflict in African with the high casualties make it extremely difficult for Gospel values to take root and thrive. And so, it becomes even harder to have any sustainable development. It is therefore important to address the underlying root causes of problems in the society. And this was Omoka’s passion,” Dr. Devine argued. He further pointed out that Prof. Omoka was one of the original key members of Shalom Institute for Peace and

many Universities in the United States of America and Eastern Africa. In particular, he impacted significantly on the world of academia in the field of social science, research methods, statistics and social transformation; his counsel was ever profound whether in the teaching or in research or with his family members.”

Conflict Resolution where he served as the director of research. “He was an iconic scholar who taught in

“Looking forward, let us honor him because we are all proud of the genius that he was; we are proud of the knowledge that he has passed on to us and there is great need for this in Africa, and beyond,” Dr. Devine called out. ©



Keynote Speaker Rev. Dr. Patrick Devine leads participants in planting a tree at Hekima Postgraduate Campus in honor of the late Prof. Omoka Wanakayi



In his homily Bishop Rodrigo pointed out that the occasion was an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the deaconate.

even myself as a Bishop, I am a deacon and I will remain a deacon, because deacon means servant and they have a big responsibility in the mission of Christ."

The Bishop emphasized that deaconate ordination is therefore not just a step towards priesthood, neither it is just a canonical formality; but rather, a commitment, an identity and a mission that remains and upon which the priesthood is working.

"Deaconate is the foundation of service that guides all your rights, and all your ministry as a priest; therefore, today we are celebrating the identity of these deacons as the servants of the Church," the Bishop added.

Bishop Rodrigo also pointed out that sometimes the Church may reduce the

"So why does the Church ordain deacons, a person who is destined to become priest? Why not just ordain priests straight away?" Bishop Rodrigo posed as he elaborated that some people perceive the ordination of Deacons as a canonical requirement whereby one must first be ordained a deacon before he can be

(Continued from page 16)

SJ; Provincial of the Southern Africa Province (SAP), Very Rev. Fr. Leonard Chiti, SJ; Provincial of Eastern Africa Province (AOR), Very Rev. Fr. Kiyimba Kizito SJ; Regional Superior for Rwanda and Burundi Region (RWB), Very Rev. Fr. Fabien Gasigwa, SJ; and the Formation Assistant for the Central African Province (ACE), Rev. Fr. Jean-Christian Ndimba Ndoki, SJ, who represented the Provincial Very Rev. Fr. Regobert Musenge Kyungu, SJ.

The newly ordained deacons include Francis Kyalo, SJ (Kenya), Noah Lungu, SJ (Zambia), Philippe Amanfo, SJ (Ivory Coast), Guy Isaki, SJ (DRC), Gandaf Walle JP, SJ (Cameroon), Toky Donah, SJ (Madagascar), Eugene Andrianaina, SJ, (Madagascar), Daniel Kamuzyu, SJ (Zambia), Cedric Mouzou, SJ (Togo), Tanaka Mashiche, SJ (Zimbabwe), Thierry Manirambona, SJ (Burundi), Mayamiko Kachipapa, SJ (Malawi), Alcidio Tembe, SJ (Mozambique), Emmanuel Chisanga, SJ (Zambia) and Xavier Murunga, MYX (Kenya).



Bishop Rodrigo Mejía, SJ in a group photo with the newly ordained deacons after the ordination ceremony on February 26, 2022

ordained priest, a process that is just part of the Canon Law. The Bishop clarified that this perception is not correct.

"Truth is priestly ordination does not cancel the deaconate ordination and even though priestly ordination comes after deaconate ordination; a priest is still a deacon and will remain so till death. This is because the Sacrament of Holy Orders has three relevant functions in the participation of Priesthood of Christ, namely: the deaconate, the presbyterate and the episcopate. Therefore,

ministry of the deacon to reading the Gospel and assisting the priest during the Eucharistic celebrations as well as serving other liturgical functions. This he said is not in order because the deaconate is not just a job description of some function, but rather it is an attitude of service.

"Diaconia (service) is one of the dimensions of the evangelization in the Church. One of the great dimensions of



Fr. Dr. Deogratia Rwezaura, SJ, Jesuit Community Rector

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Ordination of former Hekima students; three priests and six deacons from the Augustinian of Assumption Congregation on June 9th 2022



the action of the Church: the diaconia of faith in preaching, the prophetic diaconia of justice for the society, the diaconia of witnessing for the sick, the poor, and the strange. That is the scope of this service in the Church," he further explained.

Speaking on behalf of his fellow newly ordained deacons; Deacon Alcidio Tembe expressed gratitude to among others the Rector of Hekima College Rev. Fr. Deogratias Rwezaura, SJ, their Major Superiors and all the formators, at all the stages of their formation.

"In particular, allow us to say 'thank you' to our rector and formators at Hekima who have accompanied us in this journey of faith and helped us keep our promises to the Lord. Dear formators, may each one of you find in our whispering an expression of our sincere gratefulness," he expressed.

Concluding the colorful celebration the Hekima College Rector, Rev. Dr. Deogratias Rwezaura, SJ thanked the deacons "for saying yes to the mission that they have longed for, to be or-

dained ministers in the Catholic Church."

"Thank you, be assured of our prayers," Fr. Rwezaura said as he expressed gratitude also to the Father-in-charge of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Rev. Fr.

Meanwhile the Congregation of Augustinians of the Assumption in East Africa also ordained three priests and six deacons all of whom were students at Hekima University College. The colorful ceremony was led by the Archbishop of Nairobi, Most Rev. Philip Anyolo on the



Newly Ordained Deacons for the Augustinians of Assumption Congregation pose for a photo with Hekima College Minister Rev. Fr. Angelo Albertine, SJ

Ignacio, MG, together with his assistant who adjusted their program to allow Hekima College to celebrate the occasion.

And for Fr. Ignacio and his assistant, he prayed "in thanksgiving for the success of their ministry to the people of God".

9th of June, 2022 at St. Monica Parish Njiru.

The three newly ordained priests Rev. Fr. Ignatius Nkoyooyo, AA, Rev. Fr. Matondo Kabwiku, AA and Rev. Fr. Joseph Mwinganiza, AA did their Theology studies at Hekima in May 2021, while the newly ordained deacons Dominic Mutinda Mwendo, AA, Faustin Saasita Muhindo, AA, Nsenge Mpia Heritier, AA, Augustine Byamukama, AA, Kizito Ssembajjwe, AA and Julien Razanajatovo, AA finished their studies at Hekima this year.

✚By Pamela Adinda



Bishop Rodrigo Mejía, SJ with the Superior of the Quebec Fathers in Kenya and their newly ordained Deacon Xavier Murunga