

**SPEECH BY PROF. DANIEL. MUGENDI NJIRU, PhD, VICE-CHANCELLOR,
UNIVERSITY OF EMBU DURING THE ACK DIOCESE OF MBEERE
EDUCATION DAY HELD ON SATURDAY, 8TH JUNE, 2019 AT 9.00 A.M.**

- The Diocesan Bishop of the A.C.K Diocese of Mbeere, Rt. Rev. Dr. Moses Masamba Nthuka
- The Guest Preacher of the day, Rev. Cap. Dr. Danson Kihwaga, General Secretary of the Church Army Africa
- National and County Leadership present
- The Clergy
- Chairmen of School Boards of Management
- Board Members
- Principals and Head Teachers of Schools
- Teachers
- PTA Chairmen
- Parents and Guardians
- Students
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you today during this occasion of the 2019 Diocesan Education Day of the ACK Mbeere Diocese.

I am indeed grateful to you all for inviting me to be your Chief Guest during this important day in the ACK Church Calendar.

Today, we have gathered here at St. John's Kanyuambora Church Grounds to congratulate the well performing Schools in the Diocese. This is not just an opportunity to reward the best performing schools, but to also encourage and support the ACK sponsored Schools towards good performance, and to thank God for the blessings bestowed upon the Schools in the Diocese this far.

We have also come together as a Church to take stock of our achievements in the various schools, as well as to chart the way forward in promoting education of our students, especially those in form four, who are about to leave school and embark on the next phase of their lives.

I am pleased to note that the ACK Diocese of Mbeere has sponsored 72 primary schools, 42 secondary schools and 3 vocational colleges. This is quite impressive and it demonstrates that the Diocese of Mbeere, is keen to promote education within its jurisdiction, alongside preaching the word of God. I wish to thank the church, the management, the teachers, parents, students, the community, especially members from the 62 ACK parishes represented here today, and the government for the support that you have continued to give these schools. Indeed, this has gone a long way in ensuring that the schools remain effective instruments of people's restoration through education.

Today, we are celebrating and recognizing the achievement of students and teachers who have strived to ensure progresses to high-level performance. It is great to note that in the year 2018, the ACK sponsored secondary schools in Mbeere North and South, accounted for 25% of the students who attained mean grade C and above. All stakeholders, especially students and teachers, should keep alert to avoid going down from such a position and ensure that progress is made towards making A's and B's the dominant grades.

The 42 ACK sponsored secondary schools have seen a total of 281 students, get admission to universities of their choice to pursue various career courses. This accounts for about 15% of the total candidates in 2018, in Mbeere North and South.

Let us give a round of applause to the management, teachers and parents and students for their cooperation to do the good work.

Thank you.

The University of Embu, will continue to partner with schools and other institutions of research and learning to provide opportunities for higher education in various disciplines such as Agriculture, Education, Medicine, Law, Business and Economics, Pure and Applied Science among others. In addition, we endeavour to build the confidence, capacity, knowledge and skills of teachers; provide opportunities for research, library resources and laboratories to help our students to grow their research skills; and offer career

advancement opportunities to talented students who wish to further their education to the highest levels like PhD.

In the case where a student does not get direct admission to the University, secondary level should not be end of the road. There are various opportunities to pursue career courses, through the Technical and Vocational Education Training Authority (TVETA) pathway. Some of the TVETA approved courses include; agricultural extension, chemical engineering, automotive engineering, banking technology, business management among others. It is impressive to note that the ACK Diocese of Mbeere has not been left behind in this, and hence has provided such career development opportunities through the vocational colleges under its sponsorship.

As we worked on the schools' academic achievements, I believe there were challenges. However, I urge you all to focus on the rewards rather than the challenges faced along the way. I believe that even with these challenges, your resolve to excel and succeed in all that you do is strong. As you work towards addressing your challenges, remember that challenges are faced by all. Even at the University of Embu, we have our own share of challenges, yet we soldier on. Success does not come on a silver platter, therefore, we must be ready to face these challenges head-on, overcome them or improvise ways of getting where we want to go.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me now to share with you the importance of education/career and mention important roles of the three main stakeholders, **Parent, Student and Teachers**, in supporting education.

Importance of Education/Career

Currently in the world, education plays a major role of bridging the gap between ignorance and knowledge. Interestingly, many are unable to draw the line between career and education. Education is the base from which we grow our careers. One may require education at different levels to grow their career. In the current world, most mid-level careers require post-secondary education and at least a bachelor's degree. Therefore, we should

be ready to sacrifice time and money for a high level education and later to grow a career. This education will give you the background, knowledge and skills required to be marketable within your career field.

Importance of Good Parenting and Parents role in Education

Dear **parents** and **guardians**, I must commend you for supporting the diocese in its education agenda. Apparently, education and career are very important. Good parenting is equally important, hence parents should not preach water and drink wine. In education, the parent is the first teacher. As such, let us teach our children to walk the talk. Right from the home set-up, the children should know the importance of such values as obedience, respect and honesty. When they are brought up with these virtues, the teachers will not only enjoy training them, but also be proud to have disciplined students. We have seen parents who support their sons and daughters even in breaking school regulations. As a parent, it is good to call a spade a spade and not a big spoon, so that it is easier for the teachers to mould the students with your assistance. I urge you to continue performing your parental roles with commitment. I also call for teamwork in promoting education for propagation of God's Kingdom and human restoration.

Students;

Remember you are the reason for existence of schools represented here today. These schools have put in place measures to ensure you get an enabling environment for equipment with knowledge, skills and attitudes. The aim is to help you succeed and realise your purpose in life. Yours therefore, is to observe discipline and work hard. Remember, one can take a donkey to the river but cannot force it to drink the water. You are being provided with the best environment to excel and if you don't, you'll have yourself to blame. You must reciprocate the efforts of you parents and teachers, by being highly disciplined and taking your academic and co-curricular activities seriously.

Allow me also to commend the **teachers** of the various schools, for the good work of steering the schools towards greater heights. Continue with the good work.

Ladies and gentlemen;

I take this moment to congratulate the Diocese of Mbeere for their plan towards promoting **education for propagation of God's Kingdom** and **restoration of people to God's plan for their lives**. The Bible tells us that God's people perish for lack of knowledge. Therefore, by promoting education, the church is taking a great step towards the right direction, to ensure God's people are not lost due to lack of knowledge.

As we pursue the call to Christian discipleship and disciple making under the Great Commission in Mathew 28: 18 – 20, **UNITY** is essential. Our Lord Jesus Christ in John 17:21, prayed that his disciples may be united so that the world will believe in Him. Furthermore, the great leader Nehemiah in the Bible, could not have completed his massive building project of rebuilding Jerusalem's wall without unity. Thus I make reference to Nehemiah Chapter 3

Allow me now to share with you the FIVE words that I believe should form the basis of our actions in promoting **education for propagation of God's Kingdom** and **human restoration**. Incidentally, the initials of these five words spell the word **UNITY**, which gives insight into the essentials necessary for the achievement of the diocesan education agenda.

U – is for **Understanding unity**: We must understand the true meaning of unity. Unity does not imply uniformity or embracing selfish, divisive or irresponsible people for the sake of unity. Rather, unity implies that we all **embrace the same purpose** which overrides our personal preferences.

N – is for **Necessary attitude**: There are key attitudes necessary for lasting unity. Those attitudes include; *An extra mile-attitude* and *optimism*. A positive attitude will result to positive results. Unified teams need more people with positive attitudes.

I – is for **Integrity** – Integrity is being honest with yourself and others. It is about keeping your word and honouring your promises. Integrity will position you for great success and reduce the need for you to keep looking for lies and excuses to cover-up your unethical behaviour.

T – is for **Team: together everyone accomplishes more**. The singled efforts of each member does not make much difference, what will make all the

difference is the pooled energies of parents, teacher, students and management.

Y – is for **Yieldness**: This means that it's not all about me. To yield the targeted results in our schools, self-centeredness must be replaced with all-centeredness.

So if you don't remember anything else from what I shared with you today, just remember **UNITY**.

To promote education within the Diocese; and in recognition of the great efforts by students, teachers and management of schools, **University of Embu** has donated 'The University of Embu, Vice-Chancellor's trophy', to be awarded to the **best School in the Diocese of Mbeere** every year, for a **category that will be determined**.

Once again, I thank you all most sincerely for inviting me to be your Chief Guest at this great Diocesan event.

With those few remarks, May God bless you all abundantly as you continue to uplift education in Mbeere Diocese.

Thank you