

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

**TOWARDS A UNIFIED THEORY
OF A COMMON HUMANITY:**
The Way forward for the University Community

A VALEDICTORY LECTURE

BY

PROFESSOR SYLVANUS I. UDOIDEM

Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Humanities

VALEDICTORY LECTURE SERIES

NO. 22

December 7, 2021

University of Port Harcourt Printing Press Ltd.
University of Port Harcourt,
Port Harcourt,
Nigeria.
E-mail: uniport.press@uniport.edu.ng

© **Professor Sylvanus I. Udoidem**

ISSN: 1119-9849
VALEDICTORY LECTURE SERIES NO. 21
DELIVERED: December 7, 2021

All Rights Reserved

Designed, Printed and Bound by UPPL.

PROGRAMME

- 1. GUEST ARE SEATED**
- 2. INTRODUCTION**
- 3. THE VICE CHANCELLOR'S OPENING
REMARKS**
- 4. CITATION**
- 5. THE VALEDICTORY LECTURE**

The lecturer shall remain standing during the citation. He shall step on the rostrum, and deliver his Valedictory Lecture. After the lecture, he shall step towards the Vice Chancellor, and deliver a copy of the Valedictory Lecture and return to his seat.

- 6. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE VICE
CHANCELLOR**
- 7. VOTE OF THANKS**
- 8. DEPARTURE**

DEDICATION

Dedicated to Professor Sylvanus J. S. Cookey
The Vice-Chancellor that gave me opportunity to come to
University of Port Harcourt.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank the Almighty God for his benevolence, love and for the years of my service at the University of Port Harcourt. To my late Parents, Obong and Madam Alexis Obot Udoidem, I say thank you for giving birth to me and for raising me up the way you did.

I am grateful to my home Bishop most Rev. John Ebebe Ayah, who granted me the permission to be on Mission to Port Harcourt Diocese. I thank Most Rev. Alexis Makozi the former Bishop of Port Harcourt, in Memoriam, who appointed me Chaplain to the Catholic Chaplaincy for Sixteen (16) years during which I presided over the building of ultra-modern Catholic Chaplaincy Church at the University of Port Harcourt. To my Catholic Chaplaincy members, I say thank you for your love and care.

After these thirty-four (34) years of sojourn, research and teaching experience, there are people I must thank for their support., I am indebted to the past Vice-Chancellors of the University of Port Harcourt, beginning with Professor Sylvanus J.S. Cookey, the 2nd Vice-Chancellor of the University who brought me to the University of Port Harcourt, Sir, I tried my best not to disappoint you and myself. I rose through the ranks to become an Head of Department, became a Professor on record time at 45 years and served as a two-term Dean of Humanities, and when it became necessary I composed the lyrics and music of the University as my modest contribution in the evolution of the University of Port Harcourt.

I thank Emeritus Professor Nimi Briggs, the 5th Vice-Chancellor. It was he who brought me face to face with the

dynamics of University administration when I served under him as a two-term Dean, served in the Senate Think Tank Committee that drew up the Blue Print for the University development plan, and served in the Degree Verification Committee. These were exceptional responsibilities.

I must not forget my “Brother Man”, Professor Don Baridam, the 6th Vice-Chancellor. It was under his administration that I composed the University of Port Harcourt Anthem.

Professor Joseph Ajienka, the 7th Vice-Chancellor, my personal friend. He appointed me the Chairman, University-Wide Accreditation Committee and Director, Centre for Local Affiliations.

And now, I thank Professor Owunari A. Georgewill, the 9th Vice-Chancellor, who approved and gave the permission for me to present this Valedictory Lecture.

I am grateful to my colleagues and former students in the Department of Philosophy for their show of solidarity and trust. The Faculty members were outstanding in their cordial relationship. And to all my friends in the University, academic and non-academic, I say thank you for your friendship and deference especially Prof and Dr Mrs Nelson Brambaifa.

I thank the members of the Chapel of the Annunciation Chaplaincy for the love and trust they invested in me while I served as their Chaplain and spiritual leader.

My Story in Uniport, probably, would have been different but for my cousin, Miss Anne George Ifot, who is a genius of some sort. She did not only manage my domestic affairs to keep body and soul together but also found time to make sure

that all my manuscripts were proofread for initial editorial work.

I must also acknowledge my health care providers during my stay at the University of Port Harcourt. Top on the list were Professors Victor Wakwe, James O Odia, Anele Ihekweba, and Rev. Sr. Dr. Celine Essien, H.H.C.J., Dr. Chika Nwabueze; and Mrs. Augustina M. Nuga – my resident nurse. They all provided and are still providing their services gratis. May God bless them all.

Finally, to my siblings, they are the best in the world, apart from constant material support, they have constituted themselves into impregnable prayer warrior cells for their priest brother. May God continue to bless and protect them.

To all my friends, whose names, the space would not allow me to mention, I say thank you and may God bless you.

**TOWARDS A UNIFIED THEORY OF
A COMMON HUMANITY:
The Way forward for the University Community**

The greatest tragedy of human existence is the illusion of separateness, when in actual fact, we are closer and more related to each other than we are conscious of. I share this concern and awareness with Albert Einstein when he said,

A human being experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to set ourselves free from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in beauty.

While the ultimate aim would be compassion to embrace all living things, I propose that we must begin with compassion to embrace all humankind as a whole in beauty as the starting point. Hence, the invitation in this Valedictory Lecture, to direct our compassion towards the contemplation of a unified theory of a common humanity, which will engender a sense of shared values, shared responsibility and of reciprocity. The aim of the presentation is to unveil the foundation of our shared humanity. As Einstein noted,

When you examine the lives of the most influential people who have ever walked among us, you discover one thread that winds through them all. They have been aligned first with their spiritual nature and only then with their physical

selves. The true value of a human being can be found in the degree to which he has attained liberation from the self.

The contemplation of a unified theory of a common humanity is a certain recipe, which I have appropriated, for the liberation of the human person from self-imprisonment and the illusion of human separateness.

When, during the 21st Valedictory Lecture, Professor Anthony Ogbonnaya Ibe, my personal person, touched on a very pertinent aspect of our shared responsibility, the idea of mentorship in the university system. It gingered in me an old spectre that has always hunted my consciousness, regarding how human beings should coexist peacefully, serving the common good. I thought to myself, what would be the best thinking orientation that would foster mentorship as a shared responsibility? There and then, the old idea or insight about the Unified Theory of a Common humanity as a *conditio sine qua non* for the achievement, not only of effective mentorship but also for securing a peaceful coexistence within the university community and I decided to make it my subject of concern for this Valedictory Lecture.

My notion of the idea a unified theory of common humanity began in 1984 when I was trying to originate a topic for my doctoral dissertation. I came up with the idea of something that all human beings have in common -- the idea of authority relationship. Having reasoned to the conclusion that authority is a common good I further argued that authority (whether Epistemic, Political, Moral, Paternal or maternal), if it is to be genuine must be exercised for the sake of the common good of all humanity. (For detailed analysis of authority, its different forms and its relationship to the common good, see Udoidem,

Authority and the Common Good in social and Political Philosophy, UPA, Maryland, USA 1988).

I dedicate this Valedictory Lecture, entitled *Towards a Unified theory of a Common Humanity*, to Professor Sylvanus J. S. Cookey, a man whom I met for the first time in 1986 while I was teaching in Howard University. He acted with a sense and consciousness of a common humanity. All he knew of me was that I was a citizen of the universe (Nigeria). Although by divine connection we shared the same name Sylvanus, he did not ask for my ethnic heritage. All he cared about was the common good of the University of Port Harcourt. He had found a good academic and he went ahead and exercised executive authority of a Vice-Chancellor. He hired me, requested the Nigerian University Commission (NUC) office in Washington D.C., to issue my fare ticket to University of Port Harcourt, and made arrangement to have my belongings shipped to the University of Port Harcourt. I followed the directives to the detail and found myself in the University of Port Harcourt. Since then I have been here for 34 years, no leave no transfer. Even though I have had offers from many other universities, I remained committed to the University of Port Harcourt because of my sense of shared responsibility and reciprocity to Professor S.J.S. Cookey. It is this relationship that made me to decide to provide a theory of value that explains the notion of common humanity.

Corona, alias COVID – 19, has redefined humanity with a new sense of common humanity. With the use of face mask, the old image of humanity with individual cultural identities has been replaced with a common identity that is defined by mask wearing. The only distinguishing identity is the colour of the mask. The new common humanity is faceless. This phenomenon gingers in my mind the need to come up with a

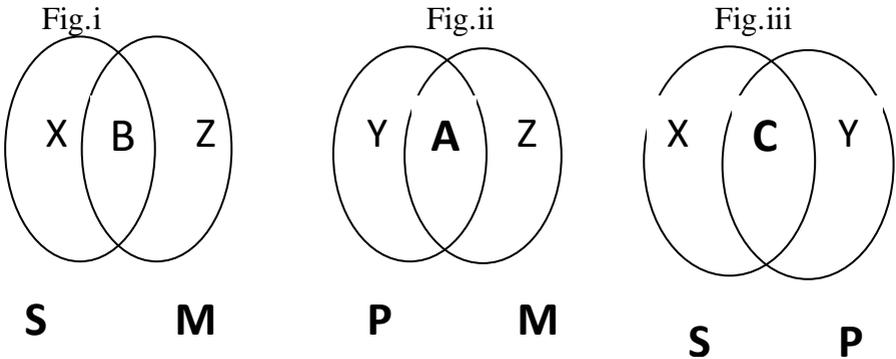
unified theory of a common humanity that accommodates the new humanity that is faceless. What we now have in common is the mask that defines our common humanity.

In the world in which we live and in a country like Nigeria and in a community like University of Port Harcourt, we live in a culturally diverse environment. In this world environment, where there are both micro and macro cultures, there is constant contest for cultural supremacy. At the macro level, we have the American/Western capitalist culture versus the Arab/Islamic fundamentalist culture on the one hand and the Far East/Chinese neo-imperialistic culture on the other. At the micro level we have the individual cultures and group cultures contesting for supremacy at all times. This is the root cause of conflicts and wars, and the lost sense of a common humanity in the world and in our community.

It is my conviction that for there to be peaceful co-existence in the world and in our community, there is need to re-invent a consciousness of a common humanity that is based on shared values, reciprocity and shared responsibility or shall we say, there is need to evolve a theory of culture (a way of life) interaction that would allow for peaceful co-existence and sustainable development. A significant element in the theory of culture interaction is the notion of reciprocity. Reciprocity here, is understood as the ability of one culture (one person) to recognize in the other that which they have in common. As a result of this common element they are able to communicate and share understanding without losing their respective identities. Reciprocity therefore could be described as a shared responsibility. This notion of shared responsibility in the interaction of cultures could be further explicated with the use of the Venn diagram. The use of a Venn diagram to justify the theoretical foundation of ‘Yakamiism, Umunnaism,

Eniainiism (The Venn diagram is a pictogram that was devised by a nineteenth-century English logician, John Venn, to demonstrate relations and shared attributes or qualities). I use the Venn diagram because it is a pictogram that is familiar to the physical sciences, the social sciences and the humane sciences, nn which case no one would be left behind in this unified theory of a common humanity.

Let us consider the relationship between culture S and M, P and M, and S and P below. Each culture is represented by a human person S, M, P.

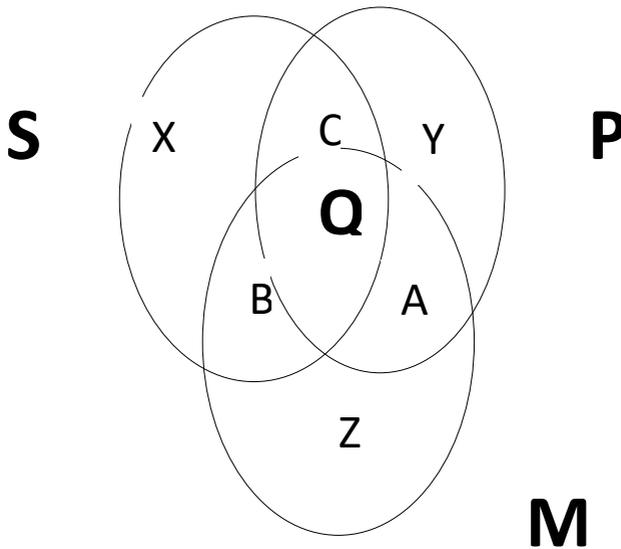


But between S and M as in Fig.i above, they share B in common which allows for the possibility of S being similar to M. B is the matrix of reciprocity and shared responsibility. It is B that allows for the possibility of positive interaction and a harmonious co-existence between S and M. What is also significant in this relationship is that it is X and Z that allow for the identity of S and M respectively. Another very significant thing is that as a result of the encounter, XB (S) and ZB (M) now become enlivened and transformed through enrichment while still retaining their respective identities. This new identity is not exactly the same as the old but as renewed.

The same is also true of the relationship between M and P as in Fig. ii where they share A in common, Z and Y guarantee the identity of M and P respectively. In the case of S and P as in Fig. iii, C is the common element while X and Y warrant the identity of S and P respectively. In Figs. i-iii B, A, C function as unifying elements and the context of interaction while X, Z, Y, subsist as the principles of identity respectively.

When the interaction involves more than two cultures as in Fig. iv below the same logic of universality or common element is involved if there is to be any relationship between the different cultures.

Fig. iv



In the pictogram (Fig iv), we have cultural universes represented by M, S and P. These initially autonomous and independent universes (cultures or persons) interact with one another individually and as a group. Q represents the universal

element(s) in all cultures which subsist as the matrix of shared responsibility and reciprocity. In the universe M, M possesses Z as a distinctive characteristic not shared by the others (S, P). In the universe S, S possesses X a distinctive character not shared by others (M, P). In the universe P, P possesses Y as a distinctive characteristic not shared by others (S, M). It is this unshared characteristic (Z, X, Y) that give the distinctive identity of the different universes or cultures (persons).

In considering M, S and P as in Fig.iv Q is the common element that unifies the three cultures. In Figs. i-iii, B: A : C as BQ : CQ : AQ in Fig.iv. It should also be noted that if there were no Z, X, Y there would be no independent identities and distinctions. These individual identities that carry with them what is common and the common elements cannot do without them. In the process of engineering culture for community peace and national unity, we must always by necessity emphasize that which is common while recognizing the diversities (Z,X,Y) as necessary sources of strength for driving the common element (unity) to greater heights. Thus instead of emphasizing “unity in diversity” in our national dialogue we should be talking about “diversity in unity.” Even though we are many or diverse there is something that is common among us. Striving to recognise that which is common in us is the engineering dimension of culture. If we keep on presuming unity as in the expression “unity in diversity” when we have not yet even interacted to identify the grounds of unity then we are heading towards a national or community fiasco as it has always been the case. It is more pragmatic to behold the diversity or difference which is a given and then strive to recognise that which is common in us, and then work towards the unity. Unity is not a given, it is something that is to be achieved. This is why Aristotle in his epistemology first of all identifies the particulars which are what is present and given to

the senses. Then through the process of abstraction he is able to take from all the particulars what is common and therefore arrive at the universal which is the common element. It is this common element that is at the core of common ground and unity. This is why those who call for the national conference or dialogue of the different nationalities (or cultures) in Nigeria, to determine the basis of our unity as a nation are much more patriotic than those who want to presume unity in Nigeria and seek to preserve it by force of arms. Having thus advanced this theory of interaction of cultures in a diversified environment, let us now examine how this theory is derived from our cultural artefacts.

If we examine the various language grammars among the various ethnic groups or nationalities, we will discover that there are expressions that reflect or represent this aspects of that which is common among the various groups, which we should universalise to reflect a sense of common humanity.

Among the Akwa Ibom people for example there is the concept of *Yakammi* --- meaning one who is related to me (though not by blood).

Among the Igbo (Ibo) people there is the concept of *Umunna* – meaning my own person or one who belongs to my kindred even where there is no blood relation. Source Prof. Mark Anikpo.

Among the Yoruba people there is the concept of *ENIAMINI* -- -- meaning my human person (with no sense of blood relation). Source: Prof. Omotayo Ebong

Among the Ikwerre people there is the concept of *NWO* – *NDAAH* ... meaning my kinsman/woman (even though there

is no blood relation). Source: Dr. Godspower Wobiareri Obah.

Among the Ogoni people there is the concept of *NDAANEE/NAVIGA/ NAWUGA* ---meaning my personal person (with no sense of blood relation). Source: Professor Sam. Nwideduh/Dr. Desmond Nbeta.

Among the Kalabari people, there is the concept of *IMYIABRA/IMYIABRE* – meaning one who is related to me though not by blood relation. Source: Professor Nimi Briggs.

Among Ishan people there is the concept of *OBHIOMBEN* – meaning someone who is related to me (though not necessarily by blood. Source Profs. Joseph D. Okoh/Anthony Ataga.

Among the Urhobo people there is the concept of *OMONI* Meaning my brother in humanity or one like me (even though there is no blood relation). Source: Prof. Igho and Barrister Esther Joe.

Among the East Africans there is the concept of *UBUNNTU* which spells a relationship of common humanity. Source: East African Communal Philosophy

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, there is the concept of *NEIGHBOUR* (as defined by Christ in the story of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37)

I will now proceed with the analysis of *Yakammi*, the language that I am very familiar with, to demonstrate the dynamics of this universal or common humanity. It should be noted that whatever is said of *Yakammi* is also true of *Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga*, *Nwo-Ndaah* ... etc.

The Value of *Yakammi-ism, Umunnaism, Eniamini-ism, Imyiabraisism...*

Yakammi is a popular expression or greeting in Akwa Ibom language grammar. The expression embodies a philosophy of universal brotherhood that emphasizes the love of self as a necessary condition for the love of the other. The other is seen and experienced in the self and the self is actualized in the other's fulfilment. It is the ideal social philosophy that allows for mutual respect, reciprocity and rational patriotism in human society.

The Christian Bible, in its New Testament rendition, says that the second greatest commandment is: "love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12: 28-34; Luke 10:25-37). Here the self is seen to be similar if not identical with the neighbour. Whatever is due to one-self is also due to the neighbour or the other self. Besides, it is in the relationship between the self and the neighbour that the depth of the common humanity is revealed and realized. So, when Jesus said to the lawyer, "You must love your neighbour as yourself," the Lawyer most likely did not understand the deep revelation of common humanity that Jesus referred to. Prior to this encounter, the lawyer thought and knew of neighbour in terms of one who lives near him, yet the Lawyer, being a rich man, lived on a massive and isolated land without anybody living near him. He was therefore surprised and wondered how Jesus could think he had a neighbour. So, probably, to prove him wrong he asked him (Jesus), "and who is my neighbour?" In response Jesus revealed the depth of human relation by narrating the story of the Good Samaritan who showed kindness to someone, not because he knew him or because he was from his ethnic group but because he recognized in him a common humanity. That person who was in pains was his neighbour.

A fuller meaning or translation of neighbour within Akwa Ibom discourse grammar would be *Yakammi* (he who is related to me - though not by blood - or somebody who is like me). This kind of belonging-ness or relation has nothing to do with blood relation or tribal or ethnic relation but a relation of common humanity. The concept of *Yakammi*, *Umunna*, *Eniamini*, etc. universalizes neighbourliness. It is not a concept that emphasizes ethnicity but a philosophy of universal brotherhood rooted in the consciousness of common humanity, which sees every other human being as *Yakammi*, (*Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga* etc., somebody related to me by common humanity). This is what the Christian religion intends by teaching the common brotherhood – neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor freeborn etc., all are the same, made in the image and likeness of God. *Yakammi*, *Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga*, *Nwo-Ndaah* etc., spell the same kind of consciousness that allowed Adam in Hebrew tradition to exclaim: “This at last is the bone of my bone and the flesh of my flesh” (Gn. 2: 23-24) when he saw someone (Eve) like him or something of the likeness of himself.

To say to someone *Yakammi*, (*Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga*, *Imyiabra*, *Nwo-Ndaah* etc.) is an expression of self-identification in humanness or sameness of like-ness.

Yakammi-ism, *Umunna-ism*, *Eniamini-ism*, *Nawuga-ism*, *Nwo-Ndaah-ism* etc., therefore is a philosophical orientation that lays emphasis on the common humanity in our human relations. The philosophy of *Yakammi-ism*, *Umunna-ism*, *Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga-ism*, etc. captures the internal dynamics of loving the self as a necessary condition for loving the other. Once there is a proper self-love, the self automatically loves the other. The relationship is atomic. The one cannot do without the other. What the Christian teaching

of “love your neighbour as yourself” intends is more fully expressed in the concept of *Yakamm-ism*, (*Umunna-ism*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga-ism etc.*), where the highest and greatest self-expression or self-appreciation or self-love is expressed in otherness. So whenever an Akwa Ibom, (Ibo, Yoruba, Ogoni, Ikwere, or Kalabari etc.), person encounters or meets another, he or she says, in the form of greeting *Yakammi*, (*Umunna*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga*, *Nwo-Ndaah etc.*). He appropriates something of the other in himself and at the same time appropriates something of himself in the other. So metaphysically, that which substantiates our being is the other. The deepest love of self is in the love of another and the deepest love of the other is in the self.

There is no doubt, therefore, that *Yakammi-ism*, (*Umunna-ism*, *Eniamini-ism*, *Nawuga-ism etc.*), is a very positive and pragmatic philosophy of human relations. It guarantees basic human understanding and mutual self-respect. It, at the same time, ensures effective and rational patriotism. *Yakammi-ism*, (*Umunna-ism*, *Eniamini-ism*, *Nawuga-ism etc.*), guarantees mutual respect and understanding, thereby serving as a veritable tool for enhancing community peace and for fostering and creating the enabling environment for self-actualization, authentic development and peaceful co-existence in our communities, Nigeria and the world at large.

Yakamiism, (*Umunna-ism*, *Eniamini*, *Nawuga-ism*, *Imyiabra-ism*, *Obhiomben*, *Omoni-sm*, *Nwo-Ndaahism*, *Ubunntuism etc.*), is a theory or framework for universal brotherhood or common humanity.

The thrust of this unified theory of common humanity is that the concepts of Yakammi, (Umunna, Eniamini, Nawuga, Imiabra, Obhiomben, Oniovo, Nwo-Ndaah,

Ubunntu, etc.), should be universalised if we are to have a peaceful environment in the university community. Employment, selection for assigned responsibilities will be based on our common humanity and competence and not on ethnic, religious or clannish considerations.

With the universal consciousness of a common humanity, you can imagine what our world, our country and our university community will be like. This place will become the holy mountain which Isaiah envisioned and echoed in the Holy Book,

The wolf will live with the lamb,
The panther lie down with the kid,
calf, lion and fat-stock beast together,
with a little boy to lead them.
The cow and the bear will graze,
their young will lie down together.
The lion will eat hay like the ox.
The infant will play over the hole of the cobra,
the baby will put his hand into the viper's lair.
No hurt, no harm will be done
on my holy mountain (Isaiah 11: 6-9 New
Jerusalem Bible Trans.)

This is my wish for the world, for my country Nigeria, and for the University of Port Harcourt community as I begin the process of bowing out of the centre stage after 34 years of service.

I am done.

Thank you for coming. May God bless you.

References

Books

- S. I. Udoidem, *The Philosopher in the Market Place*, (in Press)
- “ Vol. I: Focus on Philosophical Issues
 - “ Vol. II: Focus on Socio-Political Affairs
 - “ Vol: III: Focus on Ethical Issues
 - “ Vol. IV: Focus on Philosophy and Literature
 - “ Vol. V: Focus on African Philosophy
 - “ Vol. VI: Akwalbomology
 - “ Vol. VII: Focus on Matters of Religion and Faith
8. S. I, Udoidem, *In the Tradition of our Fathers: The Catholic Experience*, Mustard Seed Publications, Port Harcourt 2017
9. S. Inibong Udoidem, *Church/ State Relationship in Education in Akwa Ibom State*, Port Harcourt: Mustard Seed Publishers, 2015.
10. S.I. Udoidem, *Philosophy*, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 2012
11. S.I. Udoidem, *Indigenizing Philosophy: A Study of E.J. Alagoa, Elechi Amadi, Gabriel Okara, Ken Saro-Wiwa & Charles Nnolim*, Port Harcourt: Uniport Press, 2012
12. S.I. Udoidem, *Remembrance, Narrativity and Knowledge: A Commentary on Plato's Symposium*, Port Harcourt: A. Mustard Seed Publishers, 2011
13. *The Virtuous Nun: The Legacy of Rosemary Edet*, H.H.C.J. Port Harcourt: A. Mustard Seed Publishers, 2011
14. S. I. Udoidem, *Will You also Go Away: A Memoir of Spiritual Journey*, Port Harcourt: Pam Unique Publishing Company, 2010.
15. S. I. Udoidem, *African Food Crises Revisited: An Unexamined Food is not Worth Eating*, School of

- Graduate Studies Lecture Publications, Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2009
16. S. I. Udoidem, *The Footprints of Bishop Makozi in Port Harcourt Diocese: Echoes from the Chapel of the Annunciation*, Lagos: African Heritage Research and Publications, 2009
 17. S. I. Udoidem, *Engineering Culture for Community Peace and Sustainable Development in Akwa Ibom State*, Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2008
 18. S. I. Udoidem, *Hospitality as Holiness: The Genius of Dominic Cardinal Ekandem*, Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2008
 19. S. I. Udoidem, *Dreams and Visions of Akwa Ibom, From Promise to Fulfilment*, Lagos: African Heritage Research and Publications, 2007
 20. S. I. Udoidem, *The Philosopher in the Market Place: Reflections on the Future of Nigeria*, Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press, 2006
 21. S. I. Udoidem, (ed.) *Introduction to Philosophy of Science*, Lagos: African Heritage Research and Publications, 2004.
 22. S. I. Udoidem (ed.), *Foundations of Philosophy and Logic*, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 2002
 23. -----*Why Should a Human being be Moral*, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 2001
 24. -----*Pope John Paul II Second Missionary Journey to Nigeria: The Beatification Iwene Tansi*, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 1998
 25. -----*Pope John Paul II on Inculturation: Theory and Practice*, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1996.
 26. ----*Values and National Development*, Lagos: African Heritage Publication, 1992

27. ----*Understanding Philosophy*, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 1990
28. ---- *Authority and the Common Good in Social and Political Philosophy*, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1988.

b) Articles in Learned Journals:

1. S. I. Udoidem and T.V. Ogan, Understanding the Uniport Anthem: Notes on History and Philosophy, *Journal of Niger Delta Studies* Vol.3, No.2, 2014, pp. 95-102
2. S.I Iniobong Udoidem, "The Sensitive Era: Encounter with an Ex-virgin," *The Catholic Medicare*, Vol. 16, 2013, pp. 50-54
3. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "From Cynicism, Pessimism to Criticism: Professor Charles Nnolim's Odyssey," *SunNews Literary Review*, May 2013, pp. 33-36
4. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "There was a Country Before Things Fall Apart," *SunNews Literary Review*, January 2013 pp. 36-37
5. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "Nature: Gods Sublime Work of Art," *The Catholic Medicare*, Vol.XIV, 2011, pp. 10-13
6. S.I. Udoidem, Philosophy and Inculturation: The Context of Universalism, *Kiabara, A Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2011, pp 225-236
7. S. I. Udoidem, "Philosophical Foundations of Contemporary Eco-Consciousness," *Theology for Sustainable Ecology in Africa*, Port Harcourt: CIWA Publications, 2011, pp.105 - 131
8. S. I. Udoidem, "Metaphysics of Truth in the Thought of Pope Benedict XVI: a Reflection," *Proceedings Metaphysics 2009 -4th World Conference*, edited by Fondazione idente di Studie di Ricerca Published by Fundacion Jose Ortega y Gasset, 2011, pp.384-390.

9. S. I. Udoidem, "The Genius of Dominic Cardinal Ekandem," *Delta Epsilon Sigma Journal*, Vol. LIII Spring 2008, 54-64
10. S. I. Udoidem, "Understanding Nigeria's Political Grammar: A Panacea for Resolving Nigeria's Socio-Political Quagmire," *Kiabara: Journal of Humanities*, Vol.10 No.2, 2004 pp.1-125
11. S. I. Udoidem, "E. J. Alagoa: *The Philosopher*" *History Concourse 2005*, Onyoma Publications, Port Harcourt, 2005,
12. S. I. Udoidem, Understanding the Politics of Population and Census figures in Nigeria Presented at Akwa Ibom State Population and Census Commission Mobilization Rally, Uyo, 2005. *Journal of Minority Studies. Vol. 4 2005*
13. S. I Udoidem, Ethics: It's Implication for Higher Education in Nigeria, Presented at the 2004 Social Science Academy of Nigeria Conference, Abuja, Published in *Social Science Academy of Nigeria Publications*, 2004, pp.4-12
14. S. I. Udoidem, "The Influence of Religion on Politics: The African Experience," *Annual Philosophy Lecture Series*, St. Joseph Major Seminary Publication, 2004
15. S. I. Udoidem, "The Concept of Nature in Aristotle's Physics, Book II," *Academia: CIP Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.1 No.1 June 2003, pp.9-17.
16. S. I. Udoidem, "On the Definition of Philosophy," in *Foundations of Philosophy and Logic* edited by S. I. Udoidem, Lagos: African Heritage Publications, 2002, pp.1-15.
17. S. I. Udoidem, "'Rapporteur Report' on '*Intellectual Giants But Moral Dwarfs: an Examination of the Role of Morality in Education*'", Proceedings of the 18th Annual Seminar of Committee of Vice-Chancellors of

- Nigerian Federal Universities, Port Harcourt, 2000, pp157-158.
18. S. I. Udoidem, "The Dialectics of Betrayals and Revenge in Nigeria's Political History: 1951 – to the Present day," *Koinonia*, 2000.
 19. -----, "Fraud Scam – '419': A Multinational Business Enterprise in Nigeria" *Kiabara: Journal of Humanities*, Vol. 7, no.2, 2000.
 20. -----, "The World Bank and IMF: Their Negative Roles in Third World Development," *Sapientia: Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.I, no. I, 2000
 21. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "Moral Values in the Niger Delta Tradition: A Study of Elechi Amadi's the Concubine and the Great Ponds", *Journal of Religion and Culture*, vol. 1 March 2000, pp.31 – 39.
 22. -----, "Gabriel Okara on Moral Value(s): A Metaethical Reading of the Voice", *The Words that Win* edited C.T. Maduka Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press
 23. ---, "Ibibio Cosmogony: An Example of a Pre-critical Philosophical Orientation," *African Marburgensia*, XXIX, 1+2 1996, pp. 16-25. (Germany)
 24. ---, "Understanding Authority in Organizational Management," *The Nigerian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 14 nos. 1&2, 1994/95, pp.42-54 (Lagos)
 25. ---, "Philosophy, General Studies and National Development," *Journal of Research in General Studies*, (JORGS) vol. 1 April, 1993, pp. 36 – 45. (Calabar)
 26. ---, "Paradigms of Creative Thinking in Scientific Enterprise," *Dialogue and Humanism*, vol. 1, no. 1 1991, pp. 133 – 147 (Poland).

27. ---, "Ethics of Community Development in Nigeria," *Nigerian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. II, nos. 1 & 2, 1991, pp. 40-52 (Lagos)
28. ---, "Greek Indebtedness to African Philosophical Heritage Revisited," *Bodija Journal*, no.2, 1990, pp. 29-43, (Ibadan).
29. ---, "Prudence, Law and Morality," *Ogele: Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, vol.1, 1989, pp. 109 – 117, (USTPH).
30. ---, "The Politics of National Language Policy in Nigeria," *The Nigerian Magazine*, vol. 56, nos. 1&2, 1988, pp. (Lagos).
31. ---, "Philosophy and the Future of Higher Education in Africa," *Presence Africaine*, no. 148, 1988, pp. 178 181 (France).
32. ---, "Tips in Business Transaction: A Moral Issue" *Journal of Business Ethics* 6 1987, pp. 613-618. (Canada)
33. ---, "Wiredu on How not to Compare African Thought to Western Thought" *African Studies Review*, Vol. 30, no.1 1978, pp. 101 – 104 (USA).
34. ---, "What is the Common Good," *Law and Society*, no. 94/95, 1987, pp. 99-108, (London).
35. ---, "Epistemological Significance of Proverbs: An African Perspective," *Presence Africaine*, vol. 132, 1984, pp. 126 – 136, (France).

c) Chapters in Refereed Books

36. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "Preface," *The Journey of Love*, by Mary Liguori Okure, Anchila Echoes, HHCJ Publications, Printed by Mustard Seed, Port Harcourt, 2016
37. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "Welcome Address," in *Theology and Year of Mercy*, edited by Ferdinand

- Nwaigbo et.al, Catholic Institute of West Africa
Theology Week Publications, Port Harcourt, 2016.
38. S. Iniobong Udoidem, "Ethics: Its Value for Higher Education in Nigeria" *Celebrating Our Teacher and Mentor @70: Essays in Honour of Professor Joseph Donatus Okoh*, edited by Ibitamuno Aminigo & Sunday Ossat, C'Fine Publishers Port Harcourt, 2015
 39. S. I. Udoidem, "Preface," *The Revolutionary Shepherd*, by Anthony R. Etuk Uyo: Enela Publications, 2016.
 40. S. I. Udoidem, "Creative Writing as Critical Writing: A Tribute to I.N.C. Aniebo," *Critical Perspectives on I.N.C. Aniebo* edited by Seifa Koroye, Port Harcourt: Pearl Publishers, 2009, pp. 23-29
 41. S. I. Udoidem, "Preface," French Translation of *Mutanda Oyom Namondo* by Margaret Mary Okon, France, 2008
 42. S. Iniobong Udoidem, Christian Emedolu, Ishmael Gwuireama, Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Historical and comparative Study", in *Parliamentarianism in Nigeria: An Odyssey in the Niger Delta*, Edited by Ekong Sampson, ALGON Publications, Uyo 2006, pp13-24
 43. S.I. Udoidem, "A Response to George Ehusani's Fully African, Truly Christian: The Challenge of Inculturation," in *Inculturation And the Nigerian Church*, edited by Donatus Udoette & Nicholas Obi, St. Joseph Theology Symposium Series, No 1, April 2000, pp. 30 – 35.
 44. -----, "A Month and A Day in the Times of a Nigerian Martyr," *Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Crises of the Nigerian State*, (Lagos: CDHR publications, 1998) pp. 208-234.
 45. -----, "Religion in the Political Life of Nigeria: A Survey of Religious-Religious Crisis in Nigeria since

- Independence,” in *New Strategies for Curbing Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria*, edited by Fidelis Okafor, (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, January 1997) pp. 152 –185.
46. S.I. Udoidem, “Gabriel Okara on Moral Value(s): A Metaethical Approach,” *Kiabara: Journal of Humanities*, 1997.
47. -----, “The Role of Christians in Party Politics in Nigeria,” in *The Christian Family*, (Port Harcourt: Mater Misericordiae Publications, 1997). Pp 1-4
49. -----, “*Elechi Amadi – the Philosopher*” in *Elechi Amadi at 55: Poems and Papers*, edited by Willfried F. Feuser and Ebele Ofoma Eko, (Ibadan: Heineman Educational Publishers, 1995) pp.64-79.
50. -----, “Opposites as Compliments: The Significance of Zen Logic” in *Introduction to Logic and Scientific Reasoning*, edited by N. Onuobia, (Aba: Hercon Publishers, 1992) pp. 300-307.
51. -----, “Response” in *Evangelization in Africa in the Third Millennium*, edited by Justin Ukpong (eds), (Port Harcourt: CIWA Press, 1992) pp. 37-39.
52. -----, “The Logic of Creativity in Scientific Enterprise,” in *History and Philosophy of Science*, edited by N. Onuobia, (Aba: Maiden Educational Publishers, 1991), pp. 47-55.
53. -----, “The Concept of Community Development: Some Theoretical Issues” in *Social Mobilization and Development*, vol. 1, edited by A.E.C. Ogunna (eds), (Owerri: Alvan Ikoku College of Education Publications, 1989), pp. 100-110.
54. -----, “Metaphysical Foundations of Freedom” *Freedom in the Modern World*, Edited by Michael Torre, (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), pp. 101 – 108.

56 -----, "Life Panegyrics" in *The Man: Sir Justice Udo Udoma*, by Denis S. Udoinyang, Calabar: Wusen Press, 1985

Works on Akwa Ibom and its People

1. "The Pivotal Role of the media in providing leadership and service", Lead paper presented on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Founding of the Akwa Ibom State owned Pioneer News Paper on the 7th of April 2018.
2. "Towards a Theory of Re-orientation of Ibibio Mindset", Lead Paper presented at IPU Congress at Ibom Hall Uyo, August 2016.
1. S. Iniobong Udoidem, *The Challenges of Leadership in Akwa Ibom: Matters Arising and the Way forward for Ibibio People in Nigeria*", Keynote Address at Akwa Edidem Akpabio Udo Ukpa at 91 Celebration held at Mboho Mkparawa Ibibio Hall, Udo Udoma Avenue, Uyo, June 20, 2014
2. S. I. Udoidem, "*Udiongo-Idem as a panacea for Self-Actualization in Ibibio Philosophy and Culture*", Lead Paper presented at Ibibio Peoples' Union 2013 Global Congress, Las Vegas, Nevada, Aug. 5, 2013
3. S.I. Udoidem, *Ibibio History: Implication for the Future Generation*, Lead Paper at Ibibio People's Union (IPU), 2012 Global Congress, Atlanta, USA, August 3-5, 2012
4. S.I. Udoidem, *Dimensions of Ibibio Philosophy and Culture* (Unpublished Manuscript –awaiting Publication)
5. S.I. Udoidem, "*Ibom Phenomenon in the Evolution and Development of Akwa Ibom State*", A Key note Address at the first Ibibio Academic Round Table Symposium, held at University of Uyo, August 2011.

6. S. Iniobong Udoidem, *Dreams and Visions of Akwa Ibom: From Promise to Fulfillment*, African Heritage and Publications, Lagos, 2006
7. S.I. Udoidem, “*Cultural Debriefing: The Question of Etok Syndrome*”, Delivered on the occasion of Akwa Ibom Indigenes in Rivers State and Bayelsa Excellence Award 2005
8. S. I. Udoidem, “*Harnessing Ibibio Potentials for Self-Actualization in the 21st Century*”, A lecture delivered at Uyo on Friday May 6, 2005 on the occasion of the IBIBIO MILLENNIUM CONVERGE, 6-8 May, 2005
9. -----, “*Akwa Ibom Women and the Socio-cultural challenges of our time*”, presented at the Retreat for Women Leaders in Akwa Ibom State, held at Royalty Hotels, Eket, March 14-17, 2004
10. -----, *The Making of the 21st Century Akwa Ibom State: The Question of Manpower Development*, NGO and Socio-cultural Organization Summit, Uyo, 2001.
11. ----, *A Vision of the Future*, Convocation Lecture at School of Accountancy and Business Studies, Uyo, April 18, 1995
12. ----, *Akwa Ibom Solidarity: An Effective Strategy for Socio-Political Relevance*, 4th Sampson Udo Etuk Annual Lecture, Published by Mboho Mkparawa Ibibio, Uyo, 1993
13. ----, *The Ibibio: Yesterday, Today and the Task Ahead*, Port Harcourt, 1992
14. ----, *Traditional Institutions and Philosophy in Akwa Ibom*, 1992

(d) Book Reviews

1. A Testament of Light: The Life and times of Dominic Cardinal Ekandem by Edidiong Ekefre, May Five

- Media, Ikeja, Lagos, 2013. By Reviewed by S. Iniobong Udoidem
2. Cardinal Dominic Ekandem and the Growth of the Catholic Church in Nigerian, Cosmas Nwosu, Ambassador Publications, Iperu Remo, Ogun State, 2012 Reviewed by Iniobong Udoidem
 3. Unfolding the Mystery of Divine Love in the Midst of Evil: A Philosophical Excursus. Israel Ekpo, TIME Publications, 2010, by S. Iniobong Udoidem, Calabar
 4. *The New Humanism*, Udo Etuk, Afahaide Bros Publishing, Uyo, 1999, Reviewed by S. Iniobong Udoidem, Book Presentation, University of Uyo.
 5. *Nature and Limits of Authority*, R. T. De George, University of Kansas Press, 1985, Reviewed by S. I. Udoidem in *The Review of Metaphysics*, September 1986, Vol. XL, No.1 Issue 157, pp112-115
 6. Human Character and Morality, S.D. Hudson, Routledge & Kegan Paul, Boston, 1986 Reviewed by S. I. Udoidem in *Review of Metaphysics*, September 1987, Vol. XL1 No.1 Issue 161, pp.139-140.
 7. Knowing Philosophy, Joseph Omoregbe, (Joja Press, 1990) Reviewed in *Kiabara, Journal of Humanities*, Vol.5 no. 2 1982, pp. 128-131.

(e) Popular Magazine Publications

- 1 “Wazobia: The Tale of Three Nations” *Talking Drums Magazine*, London, May 27, 1985.
2. “The Status of Education in Nigeria,” *Talking Drums Magazine*, Dec. 10, 1984.
3. “Reflections on the 1984 OLYMPIC games,” *Talking Drums Magazine* Sept. 10, 1984.
4. “What’s in a Name?: A Rejoinder,” *Talking Drums Magazine* June 11, 1984.

5. "Let My People Go" Catholic Black Clergy Caucus Publication, Washington DC, June 17, 1984.
6. "Moments of Life: A Psychological Perspective," *The Voice*, Vol. XVI, Ibadan, 1977.
"What is Love?, *The Voice*, Vol. XV, Ibadan, 1976.
7. Numerous Newspaper Publications.

Works on S. I. Udoiem by others

In Defence of Philosophy: Critical Reflections on the Works of Professor Udoiem, Edited by V. D. B. Inoka, Lagos: African Heritage Research and Publications, 2002

CITATION



MONSIGNOR SYLVANUS INIOBONG UDOIDEM **Professor of Philosophy**

Msgr. Professor Sylvanus Iniobong Udoiden was born on December 15, 1951 to the family of Obong and Madam Alexis Obot Udoidem of Ikot Abasi Akpan in Mkpatt Enin Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. Being the First born child (son) of a school teacher, he began his pre-primary and primary education at a tender age.

His early education began in St. Augustine Primary school, Ikot Ntot and ended in Christ the King School (CKS) Uyo where he sat for and obtained his First School Leaving Certificate in Standard Five before the introduction of the Elementary School System in 1964. He had his Secondary Education in Regina Coeli Secondary School, Essene and Queen of Apostle Minor Seminary, Afaha Obong – Abak, where he took the London General Certificate Education and

passed six papers at a sitting in 1970. In January 1971 He was then admitted for the Monastic training for the Catholic Priesthood in Saints Peter and Paul Seminary, Ibadan. On completions of his seven year studies, he graduated with a Diploma in Religious Studies from the University of Ibadan and a Bachelor's degrees in Philosophy and Theology from Urbano University, Rome and was ordained a Catholic Priest on December 10, 1977 at the age of twenty-five.

After three years of pastoral and administrative experience as a Parish Priest and principal of Assumption Girl's Juniorate, Uyo, he got admission for graduate studies at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (1981-85) where he earned an MA in Theoretical Physics and a PhD in Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy at age 33 years.

On graduation, he taught for two years in Howard University, Washington, D.C. (1985-86), before taking up appointment as Lecturer 1 at the University of Port Harcourt in January 1987 and rose through the ranks and became a Professor of Philosophy in 1999 at 45 years of age.

He has been a Research Fellow at the Center for Research in Values and Philosophy, Washington, D.C. (1995/96) and a visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana (1996/97). He was a Scholar in Residence and Chaplain at The Citadel, The South Carolina Military College, Charleston, (2007-2008). Apart from being External Examiner and Professorial Assessor for many Universities in Nigeria, he has also served as a co-supervisor for a PhD candidate for the University of New South Wales, Australia (2001-2002), and a Professorial Assessor for University of Zimbabwe (2012).

Professor Udoidem is a former Head of Department of Philosophy and a two-term Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Port Harcourt. As a permanent member of Senate, he has served in numerous Senate Committees including the University of Port Harcourt Think Tank Blue Print Committee (2002) and Degree Result Verification Committee (2001-2002); and Chairman, University of Port Harcourt Silver Jubilee Merit Award Committee 2001, Member Committee for streamlining the Guidelines for Inaugural and Valedictory Lectures. He was later appointed Chairman, University-Wide Accreditation Committee and Director, Centre for Local Affiliations. As part of his contribution to the intellectual storehouse in Nigerian universities, he has supervised more 20 doctoral Theses. At the University of Port Harcourt, 95% of the lecturers and Professors in the Department of philosophy are his students and supervisees.

He has served as the Chaplain of the Catholic Chaplaincy, University of Port Harcourt for 16 years during which he presided over the building of the ultra-modern Catholic Chaplaincy Church- christened, The Chapel of the Annunciation Catholic Chaplaincy.

He is the Author of 20 books and over 50 Journal Articles. Among the books published are: *Authority and the Common Good in Social and Political Philosophy* (UPA Maryland USA, 1989), *Pope John Paul II on Inculturation: Theory and Practice*, (UPA, Maryland USA, 1996); 49th Inaugural lecture, entitled, *The Philosopher in the Market Place: Reflections on the Future of Nigeria*, University of Port Harcourt Press (2006), and *Dreams and Visions of Akwa Ibom: From Promise to Fulfilment*, African Heritage Research and Publications, Lagos (2007), and *Indigenizing Philosophy*, University of Port

Harcourt Press (2016), where he did a philosophical studies of indigenous geniuses like Elechi Amadi, Gabriel Okara, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Ebiegberi J. Alagoa and Charles Nnolim. He has done an extensive research on Akwa Ibom and its People and is currently working on a book titled *Ibibio Philosophy and Culture*. He serves as a resource person for Mboho Mkparawa Ibibio, Ifim Ibom Ibibio and Akwa Ibom People in the Americas, and Akwa Ibom Community in Rivers and Bayelsa States. He has been honoured with the Regina Coeli Old Boys Academic Excellence Award (2004), and Mboho Mkparawa Ibibio Academic Excellence Award (2005). In recognition of his contribution in fostering Peace in the Rivers State, the Rivers State government honoured him with the title of Justice of Peace (JP) 2009, and was appointed Chaplain for Ambassadors of Peace (2019).

He is a member of the Nigeria Academy of Letters (NAL)
Member, Nigeria Philosophical Association (NPA)
Member, American Philosophical Association (APA)
Member, American Metaphysical Society, among others.

He is the crown prince of Ibiaku clan in Mkpato Enin Local Government Area. In recognition of his intellectual prowess, he was honoured as the Ata-Ifiok I (Wisdom Incarnate) of Mkpato Enin Local Government by the Mkpato Enin Local Government Traditional Rulers Council (2005). In recognition of his contribution to the development of his community he was honoured as the Obong Unwana (Prince of Light) of Ikot Abasi Akpan (2011). In recognition of his personal spirituality as a Catholic priest, and his contribution to the development of the Christian faith both in Nigeria and in the Americas, he was conferred with Papal Honours, with title of Monsignor and appointed Chaplain to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI (2008). In recognition of his academic excellence. he was

inducted Fellow of the Nigeria Philosophical Association, and a Consultant to the UNESCO Committee on the Teaching of Ethics in English speaking African Countries (2009). In the Faculty of Humanities he is revered as the Chairman of ideas generation and refinement. He is a poet and music composer. He is the composer of both the lyrics and the music of the University of Port Harcourt Anthem.

Here, I present an unassuming erudite scholar, a silent philanthropist and a humble servant of God, Monsignor Professor Sylvanus Iniobong Udoidem.

Prof. Owunari A. Georgewill
Vice-Chancellor