

# THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI



**YEARBOOK  
2022**

# CREDITS

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## FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DESK



By Rev. Fr. Dr. George Buleya

It is said that God's action in the world is best seen in retrospect. Caught in the eye of the storm of daily routine, one can hardly see the finger of God at work until one has reached the shore. At the end of the academic year, we are able to look back and say God was truly with us in 2022. God walked ahead of us, behind us and beside us, blessing us and protecting us from January to December.

Our student and staff numbers continued to grow. In the course of the year, we received new academic and staff members, who have settled in very well and have become part of the fabric of the Catholic University of Malawi.

The University's new strategic plan (2022-2027) was officially launched during the graduation ceremony on 24th September, 2022. The strategic plan focuses on nine key outcome areas: Management and Governance; Financial sustainability; geographical expansion; Academic portfolio development; Human resource development; Campus ministry, Organisational culture; and Networking.

A number of strategic initiatives were undertaken in 2022. On the development side, the University embarked on an ambitious project of building an 18-classroom block at Nanjiri in Lilongwe. The

groundbreaking ceremony took place on 20th June, 2022. It is our hope and prayer that the construction works will be completed in 2024. The new campus will house both weekend programmes currently being offered at the Satellite Centre at St. John's (Msamba) and new programmes yet to be crafted.

In addition, the University continued to explore possibilities of partnering with the Diocese of Mzuzu in setting up a College of Health Sciences and a Teaching Hospital in the diocese. Several meetings and benchmarking studies were held to thrash out the details of the collaboration. The University also acquired a piece of land at Ekaiweni in Mzuzu. It is our prayer that this noble project will see the light of day soon.

We also commenced the construction of the office block at Nguludi Campus. This initiative is in response to the growing number of staff members. Built with the University's own funds, the two-storey building will also have a conference centre and a staff lounge.

Another significant development in 2022 is the completion of the Student Centre, co-financed by the Students Union and the University's central coffers. The Student Centre is designed as a space where students can meet, away from the classroom and the hostels, to socialise and to hold group discussions. Students have already fallen in love with this space.

Another critical process in 2022 was curriculum review. Efforts continued to be made on all fronts to complete the review of academic programmes in preparation for the National Council for Higher Education's assessment visit. We were privileged to welcome NCHE officials, who came on a curriculum review support visit on 22nd June, 2022. The support visit helped us become more focused in our preparations for the re-accreditation of our programmes.

The Catholic University resumed offering bridging programme after a two-year hiatus. The student enrolment was encouraging, and we hope to have more students in the coming years.

On a sad note, we lost two key staff members in 2022. The first to go was Mrs. Lostina Chapola, who had joined the University on 1st September 2006 as a Lecturer in Earth Sciences under



the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. During her sixteen years of service at the University, Mrs. Chapola touched the lives of many students and fellow staff members with her compassion and unflinching dedication to duty. She passed on to the Lord on Saturday 2nd April 2022 after a long battle with cancer. She was laid to rest in her home district Salima on Monday, 4th April 2022. Mr. Richard Kafulatira, a registry clerk, died on Saturday, 4th June, 2022, having succumbed to stroke and was buried at his home village Chilembwe in Lilongwe on Monday, 6th June. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

To conclude, let me convey my gratitude to various stakeholders who supported us in 2022: the Bishops, Council members, CUNIMA Management and Senate, the Student Union, and our strategic partners. Together we can move mountains!

May God bless you all and may God bless the Catholic University of Malawi!

# FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

By Rev. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani, SJ



In October, 2022, a graduate of one of Malawi's private universities performed a gesture that cast a shadow over higher education in Malawi. The female alumna videotaped herself setting ablaze her hard-earned degree certificate in Business Administration, in frustration of her failure to secure a job four years after graduation. "Whenever I see this degree, it gives me fake promises that I will get a job," she justified her controversial action. The story made rounds on social media and ended up on *University World News*. Her gesture brings to the fore the age-old debate on the object of university education. The broad outlines of the debate can be summarised into utilitarian education versus liberation education.

The idea that knowledge is meant to be useful or fruitful is reminiscent of the Baconian axiom, "Knowledge is power." According to this school of thought, knowledge is meant to help society solve concrete problems and improve livelihoods. We have seen how, down the centuries, the practical application of knowledge has given rise to life-changing technologies and systems. The higher education policy landscape in Africa largely subscribes to this philosophy. In various policy documents, we hear how universities and colleges should offer courses that empower students to become agents of socio-economic change. Understandably, higher education in Malawi has recently come under fire due to its perceived failure to deliver on its promise to transform people's lives. This philosophy also partly explains why some academic programmes are more marketable than others.

But there is another school of thought that advances the idea that knowledge ought to be pursued for its own sake. This school makes a distinction between *servile* education and *liberal* education. Servile education focuses on useful applications of knowledge. Liberal education, instead, seeks knowledge as an intrinsic good, freed from the expectations of utility. One of the champions of this school is Cardinal John Henry Newman who, in his collection of essays titled *The Idea of a University*, puts forward the argument that the purpose of university education is to form a habit of mind endowed with the following attributes: freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom. Standing on the shoulders of Cicero and Aristotle, Newman maintains that the search for knowledge is an ontological attribute of human existence, going beyond the demands of practicality. Newman writes: "That alone is liberal knowledge, which stands on its own pretensions, which is independent of sequel, expects no complement, refuses to be informed (as it is called) by any end."

Who is right?

Both.

To begin with, universities as seats of scientific investigation are tasked with discovering the secrets and patterns of nature in order to help humanity transact the business of existence more efficiently and effectively. As embodied beings, we are wired to seek tangible consequences of intellectual labour. We want measurable consequences of knowledge. Positive outcomes serve as an incentive for the pursuit of knowledge.

At the same time, excessive focus on the practical usefulness of university education can sabotage the very purport of education, for people will pursue higher education not for the sake of acquiring knowledge but to attain social mobility and instant practical results. What matters in this case is the certificate itself rather than the knowledge signified by the paper. Innumerable ills can stem from this attitude: academic dishonesty, intellectual superficiality, and the saturation of disciplines perceived to yield practical results.

We at the Catholic University are attentive to the aspirations of both schools of thought. As a faith-based private university, we will continue to ensure that the Catholic University of Malawi flies on both wings of usefulness and goodness of knowledge.

The curriculum review efforts intensified in 2022 interrogated the usefulness of our programmes and their ability to form a habit of mind characterised by human and Christian values. In pursuit of the usefulness of tertiary education, the revised curriculum will lay greater empha-

sis on the application of knowledge through industrial attachments.

Towards the end of the 2022 academic year, lecturers had an opportunity to evaluate themselves in four main performance areas: responsiveness to academic duties, participation in administrative work, research and publication, and community outreach. This exercised was broadened and made more communal in the end-of-year review retreat held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2022.

Going forward, the University will continue to strengthen the academic function by bolstering student support systems and by introducing new academic programmes aimed at responding to the needs of the community and designed to form the moral conscience of men and women.

# FROM THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR

## OVERVIEW OF 2022 ACADEMIC YEAR

By Mr. Francis V. Nkhoma



**T**he year, 2022 cannot go down into the annals of history without recalling the highs and lows that were experienced. The academic year started on Monday, 31st January and ended on 11th December. First semester ran from 31st January and ended on 22nd June while the second semester commenced on 1st August and closed on 11th December, 2022.

### Student Enrolment

In 2022, the University expected to have 6,133 students. During the second semester, from 19th to 30th October, 2022, Management undertook an exercise to determine the number and personal details of bona fide students of the University. This was triggered by the unsustainably high unreconciled fees balances reported by the Finance Department. The findings showed that the University had 5,324 students, that is almost 800 students fewer than expected.

### Staff Complement

At the onset of 2022, the University has one hundred and eighty- two (182) full-time members of staff; of these one hundred and fifteen (115) were male while sixty- five (65) were female; ninety- five (95) were academic and eighty- seven (87) non-academic staff.

### Staff Attrition and Recruitment

At the close of the year, due to resignation and death, the university had one hundred and seventy-six (176) members of staff. The University lost two members of staff: Mrs Lostina S. Chapola, who was a senior lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Director of Quality Assurance and Warden; and Mr. Richard Kafulatira, who was Registry Clerk. Mrs Chapola had served the University for sixteen (16) years while Mr. Kafulatira had served for one (1) year. In the same year, six (6) members of staff resigned for various



reasons such as age, ill health, better salaries in public institutions, and further studies.

On a good note, five members of staff joined the University: two hostel supervisors, Kazembe Gomani and Beatrice Kachiwala; two drivers, Noel Kapenda and Steve Mamani, and one stores clerk, Mirrium Mkumpha. The University, on 24th November, 2022, advertised for twenty- eight job vacancies. Out of these positions, twenty-three (23) were academic and five administrative.

### **21st Congregation**

The 21st graduation took place on Saturday, 24th September, 2022, starting with the Eucharistic celebration led by Rt. Rev. Martin Anwel Mtumbuka, who stood in for Most Rev. Thomas Luke Msusa, Chairman of the University Council. Over 1,250 students graduated with certificates, diplomas and degrees in Commerce, Education, Law, Nursing and Midwifery, Science, Social Sciences, Philosophy, and Theology. The Guest of Honour, Hounarable Monica Chang'anamuno, then Deputy Minister of Education, challenged graduates to be job creators instead of waiting for someone to employ them.

### **Outlook**

In a bid to continue offering quality service as the University continues to grow, Registry is expected to increase the number of staff in the department. The gap created by the demise of the registry clerk will be filled and the Human Resource function will be strengthened.

# REPORTS FROM FACULTIES

## FROM THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE

By Rev. Fr. Dr. Philip Mbeta

**T**empus fugit (time flies) is an apt description of the 2022 school year. The academic year has gone by with the speed of the opportunity-bearing deity called Kairos in Greek mythology. The Faculty of Commerce was packed with activities that unfolded in its five programmes: Accountancy, Banking and Finance, Business Administration, Human Resource Management, and Marketing.

### Student Enrolment

The Faculty of Commerce continues to be one of the biggest faculties in terms of student numbers. Over 1000 prospective students applied for admission into our generic and weekend programmes. Of these, 335 students were selected into generic programmes, as follows: Accountancy, 118; Banking & Finance, 49; Business Administration, 108; Human Resource Management, 35; and Marketing, 25. In addition, 158 students were selected into weekend programmes, as follows: Accountancy, 80; Banking & Finance, 20; Business Administration, 46; and Human Resource Management, 12. Enrolment trends over the past four years show a steadily growing demand for commerce study programmes.

### Graduation

In the same year, 175 students graduated on the 24th September, 2022. The graduated cohort started with 190 students, thus representing a 92.1% completion rate. Over the years, the Faculty has received positive feedback relating to the industry performance of its graduates. It is our hope that the 2022 graduates will add a voice to note to the glorious melody of our alumni's industry track record.

### Staff Recruitment and Appointments

The increasing number of student population in the Faculty has given rise to the need for more lecturers. In this regard, Mr. Lusayo Msukwa joined the department of Marketing. In addition, four part-time lecturers joined our esteemed team of 14 full-time lecturers. Dr. Gregory Kunyenje was appointed Director for the Management Resource Centre (MRC) that was formerly housed in the office of the Dean of Commerce. We wish him every success in this noble office.

### Academic Field Visits

Quality holistic education is a function of both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the course of the year, various departments organised academic field trips aimed at exposing students to real-life business operations. Accountancy students visited Salima Sugar Company and Malawi Lake Service for management and accounting of organizational assets, and public management of assets, respectively. Students in Business Administration went to Malawi Mangoes in Salima to learn more about processes of supply chain management and value addition. Banking & Finance students paid a visit to Malawi Stock Market to deepen their understanding of financial market operations and investments in securities. Marketing students, in turn, went to Jupiter Advertising Agency in Blantyre to appreciate how the promotion of goods and services is implemented in the 21st century. The Faculty of Commerce emphasizes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a critical component of business management. In line with this, Commerce students donated assorted items to Maternity wing of Mangochi district hospital and Monkey-bay hospital. Also, some students participated in the Polio vaccination campaign with the help of Limbe Rotary Club.

### Conferences, Research and Publication

Research, publication and engagement with the academic community through conferences are key drivers of academic excellence. In the course of 2022, Faculty members participated in various academic activities meant to contribute knowledge to society. Dr. Gregory Kunyenje presented a public lecture on Be-

yond Strategy Formulation: Malawi 2063 Agenda. He also presented another lecture on Governance and Social inclusion/exclusion in May. Fr. Dr. Philip Mbeta participated on a panel discussion on The effect of the Russian-Ukraine war on food security in June. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani took part in a round-table discussion on the impacts of the Russian-Ukraine Conflict on Malawi: Harnessing the opportunities organized by Mwapata Institute in Lilongwe. In September, he was a discussant of the United Nations' Human Development Report themed Uncertain times, Unsettled lives: Shaping our future in a transforming world. In addition, he was a Panalist at the Economics Association of Malawi on the topic of addressing the policy implementation challenges to accelerate the achievement of the Malawi 2063.

In June, 2022, the Faculty of Commerce, through Management Resource Centre, conducted a three-day training for Rectors and Bursars of minor seminaries in Malawi on the topic of Resource Management for Sustainability of Seminaries in Malawi. Trainers focused on optimal resource utilisation for investment opportunities in accordance with the saying, "When you need monetary assets for investment, look at your inventories before you look to your bankers." Fr. Dr. Philip Mbeta addressed the topic of Identification and Investment of Resources. Mr. Beyard Namale dwelt on Securities and Financial Investments. Mr. Francis Mabedi facilitated sessions on Financial Management.

### **Looking Ahead**

As one year withdraws into the backstage of history, another one makes its appearance on the stage, full of opportunities and challenges. The Faculty of Commerce looks forward to 2023 during which the Faculty hopes to finalise the Master of Business Administration programme document. We also hope to implement the maiden edition of business incubation under the auspices of MRC. Good-bye 2022 and Welcome 2023! Le voyage continue – the journey continues.

# REPORTS FROM FACULTIES

## FROM THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

By Alistalico Chilanga (Dean)



*Teaching Practice in progress- here we come, Stella Maris*

The vision of the Faculty is to have professionally trained secondary schools teachers who will be able to successfully impart knowledge to learners and are committed to a culture of quality teaching and learning. The School of Education currently comprises six departments, namely Education, English, Geography, Mathematics/Science, Business Studies, Special Needs Education and History. The Faculty of Education is unique on many fronts: it is the mother of all faculties at the Catholic University; it is only faculty that has retained its best staff over the years; and it has, until now, graduated the highest number of students every year. As the year 2022 comes to an end, I am compelled to reflect on the successes and achievements the school of education has accomplished. I will highlight only a few.

### Teaching Practice

The role of practical knowledge in education cannot be overemphasized. Thus, every year the Faculty of Education organizes teaching practice for its students. This year, a total of 452 student-teachers were deployed in various secondary schools across the country, to hone their classroom skills through practical engagement. Due to the importance of this exercise, we have prepared a separate report on Teaching Practice. Suffice it to say that our student-teachers made a good impression on many headmasters, some of whom would like to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Faculty to make arrangements for a yearly supply of student teachers.

### Graduation

In September, 2022, the 'Mother Faculty' graduated a record 488 students in the following programmes: University Certificate of Education, 16; Diploma in Education [English and Chichewa], 151; Diploma in Education [Geography and Social Studies], 54; Diploma in Education [History and Bible Knowledge], 15; Diploma in Education [Business Studies], 3; Diploma in Education [Mathematics and Computer Studies], 14;



Diploma in Education [Life Skills & Special Needs], 84; Diploma in Education [Science], 27; Bachelor of Arts in Education [English], 37; Bachelor of Education [Geography & Social Studies], 6; Bachelor of Education [Life Skills & Special Needs], 17; Bachelor of Education [Special Needs], 36; and Bachelor of Arts in Education [History & Bible Knowledge], 13. As Faculty, we wish our graduates every success in the industry.

### **Training**

The department of Education (Foundation Studies) offered training in improvisation of teaching and learning resources and participative learning to primary school teachers at Nansadi Teacher Development Centre. The same department was invited to train at Theological College in Zomba in the following: Levels of learning and examining; and testing, Measurement and Evaluation.

### **One-Off Certificate in Deafblind Centre**

In 2022, the Faculty of Education partnered with Chisombezi Deafblind Centre in crafting and delivering a one-off certificate in Deafblindness. Mrs. Jenipher Ngwira was the main architect of the nine-month programme that attracted over 18 students intent on honing their skills in the teaching of deafblind learners. The programme culminated in a colourful graduation ceremony held at Lotus Hotel in Blantyre on 25th November, 2022.

### **Research and Publication**

The Faculty of Education has, in 2022, registered a number of initiatives in the field of research. Mrs. Jenipher Ngwira (Special Needs Education Department) offered a paper titled “Leave no Child Behind: Disability knowledge and innovations in Malawi”, at the National Dialogue on Knowledge and Innovations Exchange KIX Africa 19, organised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNICEF, on 19 May, 2022 in Lilongwe. She also gave a paper on “Facilitating the participation of children with disabilities in early childhood development centres in Malawi: Developing a sustainable staff training programme,” at the Cambridge Network for Disability and Education Research Seminar, on 27 April, 2022.

In addition, Mrs. Ngwira has co-authored the following articles: “Co-ordinating intervention: Supporting children with disabilities in Malawi,” International Teacher Magazine (February, 2022); “Measuring the impact of a training intervention for early childhood centre staff on child development outcomes: Findings from a cluster randomized control field trial in rural Malawi.” Child Care, Health and Development Journal (2022).

Mr. Witness Mdoka has published six articles in the course of the year: “Birds in Jando ando Nsondo folksongs among the Yawo of South-Eastern Malawi,” in Research Journal of English, vol 7, Issue 4 (2022); “Anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism: Human-Animal ontology and the environment”, in The Criterion: An International Journal in English, Vol. 13, Issue VI (2022); “Human-animal relationships in Ciyawo proverbs and the correlation of human and animal attributes,” in Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal, Vol. 5, Issue 3 (2022); “Insect metaphors in Malawian proverbs in Chinyanja,” in The Criterion: An International Journal in English, Vol. 13, Issue V (2022); “Allegorical animal grooms and human brides in Malawian folktales”, in Research Journal of English, Vol. 7, Issue 4 (2022); and “Economic representation of animals in the globalized context of ecological crises”, in The Criterion: An International Journal in English, Vol. 13, issue IV (2022).

Helmut Schmidt is believed to have said, “The biggest room in the world is the room for improvement.” Through the new curriculum, the Faculty is committed to improving the delivery of academic programmes and strengthening student support systems. Having offered undergraduate degrees for 16 years, the time is ripe for a Master’s programme in education. In 2023, therefore, the Faculty of education will embark on a process that will hopefully culminate in the introduction of a Master’s degree in education.

# Graduation Ceremony for Certificate in Deafblindness

## In Pictures



1. Graduands lining up to collect their certificates
2. A graduand receiving a certificate from The Catholic University Officials.
3. Catholic University officials
4. Graduates pose with CUNIMA Officials

# FROM THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**By Anthony Mtuta (Dean)**

**T**he Faculty of Social Sciences at the Catholic University of Malawi houses the following departments: Anthropology, Economics, Community Development, Development Studies, Political Leadership, and Social Work. In the 2022 Academic year, the Faculty of Social Sciences fulfilled its mandate to offer excellent and holistic education through different departmental academic activities conducted both at a departmental and faculty levels.

## **Student enrollment**

In the 2022 Academic year, the faculty enrolled 33 students in Anthropology, 145 in Economics, 390 in the Development studies and Community Development, 49 in the Political Leadership, and 338 students in Social Work. Together, the Faculty had 955 students.

## **Graduation**

On 24th September, 2022, the Faculty of Social Sciences graduated 300 students in various programmes, as follows: Anthropology, 4; Economics, 45; Community Development, 58; Development Studies, 81; Monitoring & Evaluation, 59; Political Leadership, 6; Social Work, 48. Of these, 162 graduated with a pass, 91 with credit, and 1 with marginal distinction.

## **Staff recruitment and Attrition**

In 2022, the Faculty recruited one lecturer in the Anthropology Department, two lecturers in the Social work Department, one lecturer in the Economics Department, and one lecturer in the Political Leadership Department. At the same time, three lecturers for the Social Work Department have left the faculty for various reasons. Some have found other opportunities out of the Catholic University of Malawi. Others are going for further studies. These departures have created gaps in the Faculty.

## **Practicum**

The Faculty of Social Sciences requires its students in Anthropology, Political Leadership and Social Work to go on practicum in the second semester of their fourth year as part and parcel of their academic sojourn. The Practicum is an opportunity for final year students to integrate the theoretical and conceptual experiences of the classroom with the practical world. The Practicum also provides an opportunity for the university to get feedback on its programmes from different organisations and institutions that potentially will be employing its graduates.

This year, 90 students went on practicum as follows: Anthropology, 7; Political Leadership, 9; and Social Work, 74. The experience lasted for 12 weeks, from 5th September to 18th November, 2022.

The students were hosted by the following agencies: Network for Youth Development; Youth Net and Counselling; Catholic Commission for justice and Peace; District Social Welfare offices; Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA); Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM); Opportunity International Malawi; Forum for the Development of Youth with Disabilities; Kungoni Cultural Centre (Mua); Centre for Social Accountability & Transparency; Ministry of Health- Health Centres; and Prison Fellowship Malawi. Generally, the organisations were impressed with our students' performance during practicum. Specifically, most agency supervisors stated that CUNIMA students were well behaved, good at time management, well dressed, good at team work and showed excellence in integrating theory with practice.

## **Public Lectures, Conferences, Research and Publication**

In the course of the year, the Faculty of Social Sciences was engaged in a number of activities in the area of research and publication.

On 21st October, 2022 the Department of Development Studies, under the Adult Education and Development programme, organised a public lecture titled "The role of adult education in unlocking the potential of citizens



in social-economic development activities”. The lecture was facilitated by Rev. Fr. Dr. Mark Mkandawire, from the Catholic Diocece of Mzuzu.

On 23rd August, 2022, the Department of Political Leadership hosted a Book Event for a new publication titled *Beyond Impunity: New Directions for Governance in Malawi*, edited by Prof. Kenneth Ross et al. The Event was designed as a ‘spoken’ book review, whereby lecturers in the Political Leadership Department commented on select book chapters and interacted with the authors, some of whom were in attendance.

Mrs. Rachel Warren-Makuru (Anthropology Department) presented the following papers at the following academic fora: ‘The “Forgotten Other” in the discourse of restitution and repatriation of African cultural materials’ at the African Bar Conference held from 8th to 11th August, 2022; ‘Towards a contextualization of gendered flood-risk decision-making processes: Case of Tomali, Chikwawa’ at the Gender-Based Violence Dissemination Conference held on 5th and 6th September, 2022 at the Bingu International Conference Centre; “‘Counting the Loses:” Challenges and Politics of Provenance Research in Southern Africa,’ at the Global Summit of Research and Museums II in Munich, Germany, from 17th to 19th October, 2022.

Dr. Justine A. Mangulama (Development Studies Department) presented a paper titled ‘Of failed redistributive land reforms and Neoliberal Policies: How peasants in Southern Malawi experience a “double squeeze,”’ at a conference organised by the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, from 12 to 16 September, 2022. He also presented a paper at a conference on *Living our Faith*, organised by the Faculty of Theology at Mpale, Mangochi, in December, 2022. His paper focused on the land question in the 1992 Pastoral Letter.

Mrs. Chimwemwe Kandodo and Mrs. Sainala Kalebe (Political Leadership Department) co-presented a paper at a conference on *Living our Faith*, organised by the Faculty of Theology. Their presentation explored the regional and international context of the 1992 Pastoral Letter.

Mr. Hopkins Kawaye attended the Economic Association of Malawi Conference in Lilongwe. The conference was enriching to the department of Economics.

### **Cultural Festival**

On 5th November, 2022, Anthropology students organized a cultural day where they showcased different cultural artifacts to appreciate the cultural diversity that exist at the university and in Malawi in general.

### **Plans for 2023**

In the 2023 academic year, the Faculty, through its departments, plans to implement a wide range of initiatives, including the following: conducting in-service training for academic staff; strengthening research and publication; organizing public lectures at department level; building networks with other institutions of higher education; boosting and diversifying student support systems; and marketing academic programmes in a view to growing student enrolment.



# FROM THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE

**By Innocent A. S. Chikopa (Dean)**

**T**he Faculty of Science is comprised of three departments: Basic sciences, Mathematical Sciences and Computer Studies, Geography and Environmental Studies. Since its delinking from the Faculty of Education a few years ago, our Faculty has grown significantly over the years both in student numbers and in academic staffing. Our achievements in 2022 are in the areas of teaching, graduation, research and publications, collaboration with external institutions, and staff recruitment and development.

## **Graduation**

In September, 2022, the Faculty of Science graduated a total of 90 students, as follows: Diploma of Science [Statistics], 11; Diploma of Science [Environmental Studies], 7; Bachelor of Science [Statistics], 8; Bachelor of Science [Mathematics], 4; Bachelor of Science [Environmental Studies], 7, and Master of Science in Environmental Studies, 9. This is the highest number ever of Master's students the Faculty has graduated since its inception.

## **Seminars, Conferences, Research and Publications**

The Faculty, through the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, organised a seminar on 25 May 2022. Mr. Isaac Mwalwimba presented a research paper on "A Metric Based Prediction of Flood Vulnerability in Lilongwe city and Karonga district, Malawi." Mr. Mwalwimba also presented a paper titled "Application of Tynan and Kingdom model for Water Sustainability in Malawi: A critical analysis of water for People and Southern Region Water Board", at the National Water Conference and Exhibition, Nkopola Lodge, Mangochi, 17-18 March, 2022.

In the course of 2022, Dr Maureen Kapute attended the following workshops: Advocacy Training Workshop; Budget Analysis Training Workshop; Monitoring and Evaluation Training; Inaugural conference on climate change learning; An Engagement Session on Malawi's Country Climate and Development Report. She also played a key role in the planning and implementation of the Universities and Colleges Association of Malawi (UCAM) annual conference held in November, 2022 at Malawi Institute of Management in Lilongwe. In addition, Dr. Kapute has co-published a number of articles with her students.

Mr. Sylvester Chikabvumba (lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies) presented papers at the following conferences:

1. 'GIS-based groundwater recharge zoning amidst climate change: Lessons from Malawi', at Zanzibar Water Conference held in August, 2022.
2. 'Hydrologic and hydraulic modelling of urban drainage systems in Malawian cities,' at Malawi Engineering Institution (MEI), in September, 2022.
3. 'GIS-based spatio-temporal quantification of sediment load in an urban river in Malawi: Case of Lilongwe River', at German Federal Institute of Hydrology, in November, 2022.

He has also submitted a paper titled 'Geospatial modelling of sediment loads in reservoirs amidst climate change in Zambezi River Basin,' to be presented at a conference organised by the Pan African University of Water and Energy Sciences, in June, 2023.

## **Collaboration**

Within the year, the faculty was in talks with Principia College in the USA for possible collaboration. It is

expected that a group of students from the college will come to Malawi in around June –July 2023 for a four-day workshop and partner with CUNIMA students in conducting mini-field research on the rural-urban divide in Malawi.

The Faculty is developing a general framework for engaging our strategic partners, especially those that offer attachment services to our students.

### **Staff Recruitment, Death, Attrition and Development**

The Faculty is richer by two lecturers recruited in 2022, both in the Department of Geography and Environmental Affairs. Their names are Mr. Brian Nsitu and Mr. Sylvester Chikabvumbwa. They have hit the ground running and have added great value to the Faculty of Science as a whole.

Sadly, however, the Faculty lost a prominent member, Mrs. Lostina Chapola, who returned to the Lord on 2nd April, 2022 after a protracted battle with cancer. Mrs. Chapola was one of the pioneers of the Catholic University of Malawi, joining the institution on 1st September, 2006 as a lecturer in Earth Sciences under the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. She served the University in different positions, including that of Director of Quality Assurance, a position she held until her demise. The Faculty will sorely miss her edifying presence.

Towards the end of the year, the Faculty bid farewell to Ms. Mary Chitete who until her resignation from the Catholic University was Head of the Mathematical Sciences and Computer Studies Department. She is on her way to the United States for further studies. We wish her well and hope to have her back when she returns to Malawi.

In terms of staff development, Mr. Anaclete Manyenga and Mr. Dalitso Sambani have started research work for Master's in Applied Chemistry (University of Malawi) and Master's in Energy Technology (Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences), respectively. Mr Innocent Chikopa successfully presented the PhD protocol (Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences) and is currently working on the dry season data. Mr. Isaac Mwalwimba is in the final phase of the PhD project at Mzuzu University.

### **Going Forward**

“The future rewards those who press on,” said Barrack Obama. As we turn to 2023, our hearts are full of hope for ‘new things’. Among others, we in the Faculty of Science hope to source research funding through consultancies and grant writing; procure fundamental laboratory equipment such as atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer and Benchtop Centrifuge; address workload inefficiencies in order to give lecturers sufficient time for research and publication; and strengthen industry and community engagement through short programmes, especially in Science, Technology and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.



*Department of  
Basic Sciences*



# FROM THE FACULTY OF LAW

By Carnicius Kadyampakeni (HoD, Practical Legal Studies)

The Faculty of Law has been a beehive of activity, both curricular and extra-curricular, in 2022. These include student enrolment, graduation, moot court competition, internship, legal clinic, and training in legal research.

## Student Enrolment

Following the accreditation of the Bachelor of Laws by the National Council for Higher Education in 2021, the demand for the programme has grown exponentially. Stringent regulations on student-lecturer ratio meant that the selection process had to be rigorous. Out of hundreds of applications, 47 students were admitted into the propaedeutic year also known as the Foundational Year.

## Creation of the Department of Legal Studies

Barely a year after the accreditation of the Law programme, a new department, the Department of Legal Studies, with its Head, has been created to oversee activities in the area of practical legal studies such as moot court competitions, legal clinic and internships. The initiative has proved to be a boon to the Faculty, for it has significantly enhanced the quantity and quality of activities that impart practical legal knowledge to students.

## Graduation

In September, 2022, the Faculty graduated 30 students (18 male, 12 female) with Bachelor of Laws (Honours). This was the second graduation since the inception of the Law Programme at the Catholic University in 2013. A good number of the graduates have already been absorbed by public and private entities.

## Moot Court Competition

The Faculty of Law organised a moot court competition ("The Competition"). Participation in the competition was open to all law students in the Faculty. In a moot competition, students simulate a real court hearing. Participants were presented with a hypothetical case depicting real prevailing legal issues. The competition therefore afforded students a platform to practice and develop their advocacy skills, research, analytical, writing and presentation skills, networking skills, written communication skills and oral presentation skills. The competition took place at the University's main campus in Nguludi. In preparation for the competition, the Faculty organised a training for all law students which was held on 5th April 2022. The training was facilitated by Chisomo Nyemba, a lecturer in the Faculty. The Faculty also drafted a moot question which focused on human rights and constitutional law. It was a question related to balancing of competition rights and duties on Covid 19. The competition consisted of three rounds of court hearing. Each round was held before a panel of 3 Judges sitting as the Constitutional Court. The first round took place on 29th April 2022. 32 teams participated. The second round was argued on 13th May 2022, with 8 teams participating. The panel of judges consisted of external Judges namely Noel Chalamanda, Alfred Majamanda and Salome Mdala. The final round took place on 20th May 2022. Only 2 teams made it to the final. The overall winners of the competition were Nicole Chombo and Michael Msomphoka. The panel of judges consisted of Justice of Appeal FE Kapanda, Senior Counsel; Louis Ulaya, and Lozindaba Mbvundula. According to the Judges, the competition was a success. In addition, the Judges who sat during both the 2021 and the 2022 competitions noted a remarkable improvement in students' research, writing and presentation skills. They noted that oral submissions, especially in the second and third rounds, were impressive. Interestingly, one of the teams that reached the second round and won the third-place prize comprised first year students.

## Internships

The Faculty of Law organised internships for its students, from June to August 2022. Participation was open to all students in the Faculty. Students were allocated to different law firms and legal institutions. Students were al-



located to the following institutions/law firms: The Judiciary, Legal Aid Bureau, NBS Bank Plc, Standard Bank Plc, Kawelo Lawyers, Eva & Eva Lawyers, Jivason & Company and Women Legal Resource Centre. Internship arrangements facilitated by the Faculty were on a voluntary basis (employers were at liberty to pay or not to pay allowances to students). Students were also at liberty to make their own arrangements for internship. During the internships, students had an opportunity to attend to live clients, to work on real files and to provide practical advice to clients. The work carried out by students during internship included the following: conducting legal research; drafting legal opinions; interviewing clients; drafting court documents including pleadings, witness statements, submissions, mediation bundles, skeleton arguments, summons; drafting judgments; and attending court hearings. According to the assessment reports submitted by some of the employers, the students performed very well during the internships. The exercise also gave the Faculty a platform to network and to establish working relationships with some of the key players in the justice system. These include the Judiciary and the Legal Aid Bureau.

### **Legal Clinic**

The Faculty of Law organised a legal clinic for its final year students on 20th October, 2022. The legal clinic was held at Chikuli Community Day Secondary School in Chileka, Blantyre. The first part of the legal clinic session was a talk on human rights, given by Nicole Chombo and Moses Mchacha. The talk centred on the right to education. After the talk, law students gave advice to clients. Each law student was assigned at least 2 clients. The law students listened to the clients and thereafter gave legal advice to the client. Each student was required to complete a report after each interview. 17 law students participated in the activity.

The event was covered by Times TV and Nation Newspaper. An article on the legal clinic was published in the Malawi News of 29th October 2022 – 4th November 2022. Teachers and Students of Chikuli CDSS had an opportunity to learn more about the right to education. The exercise also gave law students an occasion to display their practical skills. Based on the reports submitted by the students, most of them were able to apply their legal knowledge and to give effective advice to clients. The feedback from the School authorities was very encouraging and positive.

### **Research and Advocacy Training**

The Faculty of Law intends to introduce a Student Law Journal. In preparation for the launch of the Journal, the Faculty organised a training session focusing on research and writing skills. Held on 29th September 2022 and facilitated by Dr Gracian Zibelu Banda (faculty member and research coordinator in the Faculty), the training covered areas including choosing a research topic, finding and applying the law, basic legal research and referencing. In addition, the Faculty held a training session on Advocacy, on 31st October, 2022. Facilitated by Noel Chalamanda, the training covered different areas including introduction to advocacy, tips for court preparation, courtroom etiquette and oral arguments/submissions.

### **Staff Departures**

On a sad note, two Faculty members left the Catholic University for other engagements. Chisomo Nyemba excused herself from full-time engagement on account of other more pertinent responsibilities that had emerged along the way. Mrs. Etness Chanza (until her resignation, Head of Department for Foundational Law) was appointed High Court Judge toward the end of the academic year. We will miss their friendship, commitment to duty and resourcefulness.

### **The Road Ahead**

The Faculty is cognizant of the fact that the law programme at the Catholic University needs to be nurtured and strengthened so as to become one of the best programmes in the country and beyond. To that effect, the Faculty plans to increase the number of full-time law lecturers, cultivate solid networks with other legal education providers in the country and beyond, bolster student support activities, and create strong incentives for research and publication.

## THE FACULTY OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

By Susan Sundu (Former Dean)

**T**he Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery of the Catholic University of Malawi offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and Midwifery programme with the purpose of training nurse-midwives for public and private hospitals in Malawi. The operations of the Faculty are undergirded by the vision, “To provide high quality nursing and midwifery education, training and research in Malawi to meet the health needs of the nation and beyond”. Its mission is “To contribute to the improvement of quality nursing and midwifery services in both rural and urban settings in Malawi and beyond through the development of highly motivated, educated, competent and professional nurse-midwives”. There are four departments in the faculty, namely: Medical Surgical Nursing, Community and Mental Health Nursing, Maternal and Child Health Nursing and Clinical Nursing Department. The faculty has a team of eleven lecturers who are all holders of Masters of Science degrees in different specialties.

### Student Enrolment

In 2022, the Faculty had a total of 202 spread across four cohorts: 52 students in 2019 cohort; 31 in the 2020 cohort; 51 in the 2021 cohort; and 68 in the 2022 cohort. In terms of gender distribution, 44 (22%) are male, 158 (78%), female.

## Students in the skills laboratory





The faculty has signed memorandum of understanding with several health facilities, name Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje and Mwanza District Hospitals. It also has MoUs with Queen Elizabeth and Zomba Central Hospitals, including Zomba Mental Hospital and Mwaiwathu Private Hospital. Currently, the faculty is in the process of establishing an MoU with Mercy James Paediatric Surgical ward under Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital.

The Nursing & Midwifery Faculty graduated 23 students, all female, in September, 2022. It is consoling that our graduates are enjoying high industry absorption rates, cohort after cohort. This is no mean feat, especially considering the growing pool of unemployed nurses in the country. Furthermore, results for licensure in the past three years is encouraging. The pass rate has been rising every year. In 2019, the pass rate was 71%; in 2021, the pass rate was 75%. In 2022, 82% of the candidates made it. In terms of research, Mr. Omero Mwale has been part of an international team that designed and secured European Union funding for a three-year research project on Electronic Maternal and Mental Health (eMAMA). Some faculty members have conducted studies and published paper, though we can do better.

### Plans for 2023

The faculty is planning to start the accelerated Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and Mid-



wifery programme once the curriculum has been approved. This will be a unique programme because it will include sign language. It will be the first of its kind in Malawi. Research activities will be intensified so that the faculty can use evidence-based teaching and decision-making. We are also exploring strategies to increase the pass rate in Council exams to almost 100%.





## THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

*By Reverend Father*

***Cosmas Kadzombe***  
***(Dean)***



The Faculty of Theology is a faculty sui generis in the sense that it largely supports other faculties through the teaching of critical thinking, Catholic Social Teaching, and courses in Biblical and Religious studies housed in the Faculty of Education. The Faculty of Theology, composed of four full-time lecturers and two part-time lecturers, has undertaken a number of activities in 2022.

### **Comings and Goings**

Midway through the 2022 academic year, Rev. Fr. Dr. Israel Madziakaphwa, then Dean of Theology, was transferred to Lilongwe to oversee the operations of the Satellite Centre and the development of St. Thomas Moore constituent college of the Catholic University. Similarly, Rev. Fr. Dr. Alfred Chaima, a part-time lecturer, received a new appointment as Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi. In exchange, so to speak, Fr. Cosmas Kadzombe returned from Lilongwe Satellite Centre and took up the position of Dean of Theology at the main campus. In addition, Rev. Fr. Dr. Peter Kantembe, of the Archdiocese of Blantyre, has joined the faculty on a part-time basis.

### **Conference on Living our Faith**

The Faculty celebrated in style the 30th anniversary of the 1992 Pastoral Letter Living our Faith by organizing a conference at which illustrious members of the academia presented papers on various dimensions of the landmark pastoral letter. The Conference, held at Mpale Cultural Village (Mangochi) from 15th to 16th December 2022, was patronized by various academic and ecclesiastical authorities including the Most Reverend Archbishop Thomas L. Msusa (Archbishop of Blantyre and Chairman of University Council), His Lordship Bishop Martin A. Mtumbuka (Bishop of Karonga Diocese), His Lordship Bishop Montfort Stima (Bishop of Mangochi Diocese), pastoral secretaries from various dioceses in Malawi, and many others. Among those who presented papers are Rev. Fr. Dr. George Buleya, Vice-Chancellor of the Catholic University; Rev. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani, SJ, Director of Academic Affairs at the Catholic University; Rev. Fr. Dr. Alfred Chaima, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference; Dr. Henry Chingaipe, Director and Lead Consultant at the Institute for Policy Research and Social Empowerment; Dr. Limbani Nsapato, Country Director of Edukans; Dr.

Gerard Chigona, from the Ministry of National Unity; Dr. Mzee Herman Yokoniah Mvula, from the University of Malawi; Mrs. Chimwemwe Kandodo and Mrs. Sainala Kalebe, lecturers in the Department of Political Leadership at the Catholic University of Malawi; and Dr. Justine A. Mangulama, senior lecturer in Development Studies at the Catholic University. During the conference, the Faculty of Theology honoured with symbolic gifts Montfort Media (represented by Fr. Piergiorgio Gamba) and Rt. Rev. Allan Chamgwera, Bishop Emeritus of Zomba Diocese and the only surviving member of the team that penned the Pastoral Letter. The Faculty plans to publish conference proceedings in 2023, under the auspices of CUNIMA Publishing House.

### **Public Lectures**

On 1st November, 2022, Fr. Cosmas Kadzombe presented a paper on Gender theory at a public lecture organised by the Gender and Justice Club of the Catholic University. The presentation was based on the document released by the Vatican Dicastery for Catholic Education in 2019 entitled “Male and Female He created them”, in which the Church offers her stance on the emergence of the “gender theory”. Fr. Dr. George Buleya, Vice-Chancellor of the Catholic University, also made a presentation on “Sexual and Reproductive Health” on 15th November, 2022 to the same club.

### **Looking Ahead**

Come 2023, the Faculty of Theology will start offering short courses on theological and pastoral issues, especially those that have a bearing on contemporary Christian life. In addition, following Pope Francis’ institution of the ministry of catechist last year (May, 2021), the Faculty of Theology plans to create courses aimed at empowering catechists with adequate theological knowledge for proper pastoral engagement.

## FROM THE LIBRARY

By Mrs. Patience Mhone (Librarian)

In any institution of higher learning, the library plays a pivotal role in facilitating the discovery and expansion of knowledge. At the Catholic University of Malawi, the library continues to be a privileged space where students and faculty come to listen to and dialogue with a vast array of thinkers who immortalized their thoughts by putting them on paper. In 2022, the library has witnessed a number of developments, which are the subject of this report.

### Acquisition of Books

The University, with its limited financial resources and support from partners, has invested over K46 million in the acquisition of over 516 printed books to support the curriculum review process. The departments that benefited from this initiative include Philosophy, Biblical and Religious Studies, Banking and Finance, Business Administration, Human Resource Management, Marketing, Accountancy, Clinical Nursing, Maternal, and Child Health, Medical and Surgical Nursing, Community and Mental Health Nursing, Economics, Social Work, Community Development, Development Studies, Political Leadership, Monitoring and Evaluation, Anthropology, and all departments in Education and Sciences.

### Donations

The Catholic University of Malawi Library has in 2022 received tremendous support, both financially and materially, which has boosted the library services and operations in satisfying the needs of the clients. It has received donations in form of cash to acquire books, and print books and journals from different well-wishers. New England Malawi Association (NEMA) donated 214 books, while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) enriched our library with 26 journals and 99 journals, respectively. Malawi National Library Services donated 86 books. In addition, the library received an assortment of journals and books from Chisombezi Deafblind Centre. The Chapola family donated 234 books that used to belong to the late Mrs. Lostina Chapola, an illustrious faculty member who passed on in the course of the year – may she rest in eternal peace.

### Internet Services

It is a truism that Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) has become an indispensable tool in facilitating the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. The ubiquity of information, thanks to the internet, has even put into question the role of physical libraries in the 21st century. The answer lies not in pitting one against the other but in integrating traditional libraries and ICT innovations.

The Catholic University of Malawi has worked to strengthen its internet by increasing the

bandwidth. The Library Management System (KOHA), as well as all computers at the Law Library and Resource Centre, is now run on TNM internet of 21MB/sec. In addition, the library is connected to Student 3 Wi-fi and library Wi-Fi, whose bandwidth has been increased from 8-10MB/sec to 21MB/sec, thereby making it easy for users to have access to e-resources.

### **Server to the Library Repository**

The emergence of Institutional Repositories (IRs) over the past few decades has not only provided a pathway for institutions to share digitised intellectual wealth with the global community of scholars but has also facilitated the long-term preservation of information. Talking of IRs, the Catholic University has purchased a big server to be used for Institutional Repository and virtual library. In summary, electronic past papers, dissertations, and all published books/journals will be uploaded and kept in this repository for easy access.

### **Online Public Access Catalog**

Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) is a catalog of a library's collection that is open and accessible to the public through the internet. A library catalog provides users with a platform to search and locate books and other materials available at the library. Having seen the relevance of OPAC to academic life, the Catholic University has purchased six computers that are to be installed and used as OPAC. The installation process has already started and as the year 2023 starts, the Catalogue will already be in use.

### **Binding Services**

Preservation and binding are aspects of librarianship that the Catholic University Library always pays attention to, since printed books still constitute the bulk of the library collection. Contrary to the 'culture of waste' orchestrated by what is known as 'planned obsolescence', the Catholic University subscribes to the philosophy of repair and preservation. In 2022, 129 books were taken for the binding service and 1200 newspapers were bound into 12 books.

Academic Qualifications Improvement of Library Staff

Human resources are a critical resource in any organization. Similarly, well-informed library staff is one of the greatest assets of the library. This is also one of the reasons the Catholic University of Malawi encourages its employees to upgrade their qualifications so as to be competent and provide the best and good quality services to users. The following library staff are pursuing higher qualifications:

- |    |           |                         |         |         |
|----|-----------|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| 1. | Acting    | Librarian-BLIS:         | Masters | pending |
| 2. | Assistant | Librarian-BLIS:         | Masters | pending |
| 3. | Senior    | Library Assistant-DLIS: | Degree  | pending |

### **Plans for 2023**

'The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few', says a well-known adage. Among the plans for 2023 are the following: expansion of library holding both in terms of physical and electronic resources; improvement of the phys-



ical environment to make it more conducive to study; strengthening of the security system to prevent pilferage of books; and an institution-wide promotion of library use.

## FROM THE ICT DEPARTMENT

By Paul Daniel Mpuwa (Deputy ICT Manager)



**I**nformation and Communication Technology (ICT) in education improves engagement and knowledge retention: When ICT is integrated into lessons, students become more engaged in their work. This is because technology provides different opportunities to make it more fun and enjoyable in terms of teaching the same things in different ways. The ICT department's major role at the Catholic University of Malawi is to provide information services to all users and stakeholders.

Over the years, the university has invested in technology through a number of initiatives as a way of meeting the growing demand for information services. Major ICT projects that CUN-IMA has invested in include;

1. Migrating to new accounting software
2. Implementing a new payroll system
3. Introducing a new students management system
4. Upgrading internet capacity
5. Introducing a repository platform

### **Integrated Computer Systems**

In efforts to improve and optimize business processes, the university invested in three major systems (software) to integrate operations of different departments. The integrated information system is a collection of several collections of information that are combined in an organized manner, collected at different times by different units to be available to all who need it. Currently the university has managed to successfully implement the new accounting software and payroll system. The student management system is currently being developed and will soon be implemented. Once all these systems are implemented and fully operational, users should expect improved service delivery in all the departments.

### **Upgrading Internet Capacity**

The Internet plays an important role in the educational process by providing great opportunities

for development. Thanks to the Internet, students can study remotely and gain access to many useful courses provided free of charge by the world's leading universities. Everyone needs the Internet for one reason or another. Lecturers and students benefit from the unprecedented access to information that the Internet provides, as well as the ability to share knowledge around the world. It is against this background that CUNIMA decided to upgrade its internet capacity from 10Mbps to 46 Mbps. The university also engaged a new internet service provider as a way of making sure that users stay connected at all times. Designated sites were identified and internet is provided to students through WIFI. SSIDs and passwords for these connections were posted on all strategic points. Students have a dedicated connection of 10 Mbps.

### **Digital Repository Platform**

Digital repository is a central storage place which can be used to store and distribute any digital content to the client systems, in the form of videos, audio or document files. Students and staff can browse the contents or download and store them on their local drive for later reference. This repository can be accessed from any location (locally or through the internet) using laptops, desktops or any mobile device. The ICT department is in the process of configuring the platform so that it can be ready for use in the coming semester.

### **Plans for 2023**

Our plans for 2023 are to create a detailed ICT roadmap for the University and to strengthen ICT services currently on offer. In addition, we will start populating the Student-Employer Interface Platform (CU-SEIP), whose objective is to initiate value-adding interactions between students and industry players in hopes of creating bridging students' transition to the workplace.

## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHAPLAIN

By Rev. Fr. Kondwani Mwenegamba

**T**he Catholic University of Malawi aims at providing a conducive atmosphere in which students grow integrally. The year 2022 has been full of activities for the office of the Chaplain. The chaplaincy has accompanied students and members of staff through many religious and social activities.

### **Sacramental Life**

The Catholic University of Malawi places great premium on the spiritual growth of both members of staff and the students. The realization of this goal was facilitated by various activities that have taken place in the course of the year. To begin with, the celebration of daily Masses on campus gave a chance to students and members of staff to begin their daily activities on a prayerful note. During this year, students have been given a chance to receive various sacraments. Many students and staff received the sacrament of reconciliation. Further, the Chaplaincy prepared a number of students to receive the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

### **Catechetical Instruction**

The Chaplaincy organised catechetical lessons with the aim of helping students to deepen their knowledge of the Christian faith and to strengthen their relationship with God. This ongoing Christian formation journey has focused on a number of foundational issues of the Christian life, especially the sacraments.

### **Supporting Religious and Devotional Groups**

The Catholic University upholds freedom of worship within the boundaries of Catholic ethos. As such, both Catholic and non-Catholic students are allowed to form religious groups with the objective of providing mutual support and nurturance in matters of faith. These groups give a chance to students of different denominations to meet and practice their faith. The office of the Chaplain accompanies these groups through such interventions as spiritual talks and recollections offered by carefully selected resource persons. Going forward, we hope to rope in more professionals in facilitating such sessions, in response to the felt needs of both students and staff.

### **Promoting Solidarity with the Poor**

Solidarity with the poor is one of the core principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST), a course taken by every student at the Catholic University. The office of the Chaplain encourages students and staff to live out this principle by reaching out to needy students on campus and the poor beyond the confines of the University. In the course of the 2022 academic year, students have stretched a giving hand to their needy counterparts by providing the latter with basic needs.

### **Student Involvement**

During this year the office of the Chaplain has engaged students in many pastoral activities taking place at the institution. A number of students have participated in the organ-



isation and execution of liturgical celebrations as choir members, altar servers, liturgical dancers or readers. Through this engagement, students cultivate leadership skills, self-awareness and team spirit – critical attributes needed at the workplace and in society.

### **Individual Accompaniment**

The office of the Chaplaincy has endeavoured to make the chaplaincy more friendly and accessible to students. Among the strategies employed is the open door policy, whereby a student can simply walk in and share his/her thoughts or struggles. Sometimes the chaplaincy co-opts strategic partners, mostly members of staff from various departments, in addressing specific affecting students. The assurance of confidentiality has made the chaplaincy a suitable place for counseling. Through personal accompaniment, a number of students have recovered from their challenges.

### **Way Forward**

Each new academic year comes with its opportunities and challenges. The dedication of some members of staff in supporting the chaplaincy is one of the great opportunities we have enjoyed in 2022. It is our hope that this support will be intensified in 2023 with the involvement of more members of staff. The Chaplaincy will also continue to promote its services among students and staff in order to increase their engagement with the office. The office is also planning to strengthen campus ministry, pursuant to the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan of the Catholic University of Malawi. The strategic activities include provision of professional counseling services; mainstreaming of student-led outreach programmes; doubling down on the number of pastoral activities; and the training of peer counselors.

# FROM CENTRES AND DIRECTORATES

## DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

**By Hendrix Kaonga (Research Staff)**

The Directorate of Research and Publications (DRP) was designed to coordinate all research activities and research support functions at the Catholic University of Malawi. The directorate thus coordinates research work, applications for external research funding as well as the disbursement of internal research funds. Through CUNIMAREC and CUNIMAREC Secretariat, the DRP is mandated to facilitate review of research protocols by student and staff. Also, the directorate provides research capacity building and is a hub of research outcome dissemination at CUNIMA.

### Setting Up Research Infrastructure

In 2022, the directorate focused on the creation of a research environment at CUNIMA that would enhance effective and innovative research among students and staff. In the recent past, the emphasis has been on the actual implementation of research projects with minimal consideration of the key role research support functions play in the research process. Coupled with fragmented efforts due to absence of a research policy the results have been unsatisfactory. In response to the observations, the directorate specifically worked on the following areas:

- Drafting University Research Policy
- Processing Official Recognition of the University as a Research Institution by the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST)
- Drafting of Student Handbook for Writing Dissertations
- Working on consolidating research funds from external sources through grant applications and research collaborations with other institutions
- Managing University Journal
- Organising outreach activities and public engagement
- Facilitating dissemination of research findings

### Drafting University Research Policy

An existing draft policy was reworked and presented to the senate in November, 2022. The policy was approved, subject to alterations/amendments. The directorate is working on the amendments. Toward Official Recognition of the University as research institute by NCST In June 2022, the directorate undertook a day long working visit at Nation Council

for Science and Technology office in Lilongwe to kick start the process of securing the official recognition of CUNIMA as a research institution by NCST. The Research Officer met Mr Mike Kachedwa (Chief Research Services Officer-Health, Social Sciences and Humanities) and Ms Yalonda Mwanza Kapewa (Research Officer-Health, Social Sciences and Humanities) and the following were key observations:

- CUNIMA should institute a proper CUNIMAREC to boost research capacity and standing
- The functions of CUNIMAREC administrator can be merged with existing portfolios in the directorate
- CUNIMA should learn from peers to avoid re-inventing the wheel in the establishment and management of CUNIMAREC and CUNIMAREC secretariat
- Establishment of CUNIMAREC should be anchored in CUNIMA Research Policy.

Though CUNIMAREC and CUNIMAREC Secretariat are yet to be (re)instituted, the directorate managed to draft and submit to NCST CUNIMAREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Guidelines which are under review by NCST. Once approved, the directorate will submit an application package to NCST for approval of the reinstituted CUNIMAREC as a research protocol review entity.

University Handbook for Student Projects, Theses and Dissertations  
In order to standardize dissertation writing and to improve supervision of student projects, theses and dissertations the directorate drafted Student Handbook for Writing Dissertations at CUNIMA. The handbook was circulated for review by key offices in the university in July 2022. The review process is in the progress. Once completed, the handbook will be submitted to senate for approval.

### **Research grant applications research and research collaborations with other institutions**

One of the areas of interest for the directorate is consolidating research funds for students and staff, from external sources through grant applications and research collaborations with other institutions. In the year, the directorate applied for two research grants:

- IUCN call for proposals for Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Environments (RISE) grants (in collaboration with YONECO)
- Technical Proposal for Strengthening Women's leadership in Civil Society Submitted to Trocaire Malawi

On the same note, the directorate met Prof Lampiare from Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHEs) for possible research collaboration and faculty-staff exchange programmes between the two universities under ACEPHEM - ACE II. A CUNIMA staff member with an interest in Herbal Medicine Research was offered an opportunity for possible collaboration with KUHEs.

### **University Journal and CUNIMA Publishing House**

Under the management of the University Journal and CUNIMA Publishing House, the directorate carried out two key initiatives in the year:

- Call for papers for publishing in the University Journal under the theme Governance and Social Inclusion/Exclusion.
- Brainstorming Session, facilitated by Dr. Gregory Kunyenje, on the Governance and Social Inclusion/Exclusion, aimed at inspiring journal articles.

### **Public Engagement**

Besides classroom instruction and research, the University, through the directorate, undertook public engagement activities chiefly through CUNIMA Conversation, a panel discussion hosted at Montfort Campus that brings together experts from different fields to dissect topical issues in Malawi. Two editions of CUNIMA Conversations were planned for the 2022 academic year. However, due to financial constraints, only one took place. The discussion examined whether Malawi was doing anything to cushion itself from the looming food crisis triggered by the Russia-Ukraine war. Both events were broadcast live on Television and livestreamed on the University's Facebook page.

### **The Journey Ahead**

The directorate is still in its infancy, taking baby steps toward growing CUNIMA into a research and publication powerhouse. Counting on the collaboration of faculties, the directorate will in 2023 continue to champion research and publication initiatives. There are strong indications that JOCUNIMA, the University's journal, will be revived within the first half of 2023. We are also optimistic that a few volumes will be published under CUNIMA Publishing House in the coming year.



## A CATALOGUE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, PUBLIC LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

The Catholic University of Malawi, theretofore known for quality teaching, is growing into a hive of research and publication. In 2022, the University recorded the following initiatives:

### Conferences and Public Lectures

- On 12th September, 2022, the Catholic University hosted Ambassador David Claude Pierre - Permanent representative of African Union (AU) to Southern African Region, COMESA and SADC. He presented a public lecture on The African Union, AU Southern Africa Regional Office and Agenda 2063 African Union.
- On 21st October, 2022, the Department of Development Studies, under the Adult Education and Development programme, organised a public lecture titled, The role of adult education in unlocking the potential of citizens in social-economic development activities. The lecture was facilitated by Rev. Fr. Dr. Mark Mkan-dawire.
- On 1st November, 2022, Rev. Fr. Cosmas Kadzombe gave a public lecture from the gender justice perspective titled, The Lord Created Them Male and Female. The event took place in Lecture Theatre One.
- The Catholic University, through the department of Political Leadership, held a book event workshop on 23rd August, 2022, for a new publication titled, Beyond Impunity: New Directions for Governance in Malawi, edited by Prof. Kenneth Ross et al.

In addition, the following members of academic staff attended or made presentations at various conferences and academic fora as follows:

- Isaac Mwalwimba (Faculty of Science), “Application of Tynan and Kingdom model for Water Sustainability in Malawi: A critical analysis of water for People and Southern Region Water Board”, National Water Conference and Exhibition, Nkopola Lodge, Mangochi, 17-18 March, 2022; “A metric-based prediction of Household vulnerability to Floods in Lilongwe City and Karonga District in Malawi”, Public Lecture organised by the Faculty of Science, The Catholic University of Malawi, 25 May, 2022; Integration of Early Warning in Flood Vulnerability Framework in Urban and Rural Areas, Malawi, during the International Day for

Disaster Reduction Commemoration, held at Gosheni Primary School, Golomoti, Dedza, on 13th October, 2022; Measuring Vulnerability to Assess Households' Resilience to Flood Risks in Karonga District, Malawi, at the 5th Biennial Southern Africa Society for Disaster Reduction (SASDiR) Conference held from 26th to 28th October, 2022.

- Jenipher M. Ngwira (Faculty of Education), "Leave no Child Behind: Disability knowledge and innovations in Malawi", National Dialogue on Knowledge and Innovations Exchange KIX Africa 19, Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNICEF, 19 May, 2022, Lilongwe; "Facilitating the participation of children with disabilities in early childhood development centres in Malawi: Developing a sustainable staff training programme," Cambridge Network for Disability and Education Research Seminar, 27 April, 2022.
- Gregory Kunyenje, PhD (Senior Lecturer, Business Administration), Key-note address titled Information Systems: Are they tools for progress or unintended activity? at the Second International Conference on Innovations in Electronics and Communication Systems, organised [virtually] by R.M.K College of Engineering and Technology in India, on 25th November, 2022.
- Sylvester Chikabvumba (lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies), GIS-based groundwater recharge zoning amidst climate change: Lessons from Malawi, at Zanzibar Water Conference held in August, 2022; Hydrologic and hydraulic modelling of urban drainage systems in Malawian cities, at Malawi Engineering Institution (MEI), in September, 2022; GIS-based spatio-temporal quantification of sediment load in an urban river in Malawi: Case of Lilongwe River, at German Federal Institute of Hydrology, in November, 2022.
- Justin A. Mangulama, PhD (Senior Lecturer, Development Studies), Of failed redistributive land reforms and Neoliberal Policies: How peasants in Southern Malawi experience a "double squeeze," at a Conference organised by the Institute for Poverty, Land, and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, from 12th to 16th September, 2022.
- Louis Jere (Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor), A Critique of the Belt and Road Initiative: Is It a Policy Tool for Geopolitical Concerns or for Geoeconomic Considerations? at a Sino-Malawi Cultural Conference organised by the Chinese Confucius Institute in conjunction with UNIMA on 8th October, 2022 at

the Golden Peacock Hotel in Lilongwe.

- Rachel Warren (lecturer in the Department of Anthropology), The ‘Forgotten Other’ in the discourse of restitution and repatriation of African cultural materials, at the African Bar Conference held from 8th to 11th August, 2022; Towards a contextualization of gendered flood-risk decision-making processes: Case of Tomali, Chikwawa, at the Gender-Based Violence Dissemination Conference held on 5th and 6th September, 2022 at the Bingu International Conference Centre; Counting the Losses: Challenges and Politics of Provenance Research in Southern Africa, at the Global Summit of Research and Museums II in Munich, Germany, from 17th to 19th October, 2022.
- A delegation from the Catholic University, consisting of the Vice Chancellor, Director of Academic Affairs, Dr. Maureen Kapute and Mr. Hopkins Kawaye, actively participated by playing different roles in last year’s Universities and Colleges Association of Malawi (UCAM) Annual Conference on the theme, Universities and Colleges as Drivers of Knowledge-Based Economy in Implementing Malawi2063, held at Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) from 23rd to 24th November, 2022.
- Rev. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani, SJ (Director of Academic Affairs), was invited to speak at the following events: Roundtable discussion on Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Malawi: Dialogue on Harnessing the Opportunities, jointly organised by Mwapata Institute, the National Planning Commission and the United Nations Development Programme, at Capital Hotel, Lilongwe, on 20th July, 2022; Breakfast Launch of the United Nations Human Development Report (HDR) themed Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping Our Future in a Transforming World, held at Bingu International Conference Centre, Lilongwe, on 8th September, 2022; Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA) Annual Conference on the theme Addressing the Policy Implementation Challenges to Accelerate the Achievement of the Malawi 2063, at Sunbird Nkopola Lodge, 3-4 November, 2022; Intellectual Apostolate Commission of the Southern Africa Province of the Society of Jesus on the theme, Avatarised Existence in Virtual Worlds: Implications for the Principle of Sacramentality on 30th December, 2022.

## Publications

- Mangulama, J & Wu, J. (2022), “Land reform or continued social exclusion? State responses to land occupations in Southern Malawi,” in Capital penetration and peasantry in Southern Africa: Advances in African economic, social and polit-

ical development (Cham: Springer).

- Mpofu, B. & Mapaketi, M. (2022). Dislocation and continuity: Marking the 30th anniversary of the Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter Living our Faith, HTS Teologiese/Theological Studies (online publication).
- Soni, A., Ngwira, J. M., Reyes Soto, M., Lynch, P. (June, 2022). Go transdisciplinary, International Teacher Magazine.
- Soni, A., Ngwira, J. M., Reyes Soto, M., Lynch, P. (February, 2022). Co-ordinating intervention: Supporting children with disabilities in Malawi, International Teacher Magazine.
- Jolley, E. Lynch, P. Ngwira, J.M. et al. (2022). Measuring the impact of a training intervention for early childhood centre staff on child development outcomes: Findings from a cluster randomized control field trial in rural Malawi, Child Care, Health and Development Journal.
- Vuntade, D. & Mzuza, M. K. (2022). Factors Affecting Adoption of Conservation Agriculture Practices in Mpatsa Extension Planning Area, Nsanje, Southern Malawi. Journal of Geoscience and Environment Protection, 10, 96-110.
- Mnenula, T. M. and Mzuza M. K. (2022). Factors Influencing the Potential of Biogas usage in Thyolo District, Malawi. In Current Advances in Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (Ed. Huan Yu), China: Book Publisher International.
- Zande, R. & Mzuza, M. K. (2022). An Investigation of the Factors Influencing Community Participation in Forest Management: A Case of Balaka District, Malawi. Journal of Geoscience and Environment Protection, 10, 84-95.
- Chiwaya, C. & Mzuza, M. K. (2022). Factors Influencing Community Participation in Forestry Management in Chiradzulu District, Malawi. Open Journal of Forestry, 12, 177-184.
- Mwalule, G., & Mzuza, M. K. (2022). Factors Influencing the Use of Solar Energy Technology in a Local Township of Blantyre City, Malawi. Open Journal of Energy Efficiency, 11(1), 1-9.
- Kaonga, H. (2022). High field strength elements and rare earth elements min-



eralization at Machinga Prospect in the Chirwa Alkaline Province, Southern Malawi. Journal of African Earth Sciences (online publication).

## FROM THE MANAGEMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

By Dr. Gregory Kunyenje (Director)

I join the Management Resource Centre of the Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA) with great excitement, but bearing in mind that there is a mammoth task ahead to take the Centre to greater heights. Since my appointment in November 2022, I have gained a sense of the major projects that the previous leadership has undertaken and the huge expectations from a variety of stakeholders. In this vein, I begin the journey confident of the executive support but I am also aware that the Centre has an immense role to play in the domain of business management.

As a background, the Catholic University of Malawi established the Management Resource Centre in 2015 with the aim of creating an enabling environment for the interface between the University and industry in the provision of business services that include training, research and consultancies. To date, the Centre has trained bursars and finance experts from seminaries, hosted a business breakfast session with business executives and provided business-related training to women groups participating in agri-businesses as part of the realisation of its mission. At the time of my appointment, there were plans to initiate business incubation activities as a channel for CUNIMA students to showcase their entrepreneurial skills. The idea is to excite students into forming successful start-up businesses, and in the process help create employment for themselves and others.

The challenges facing businesses in Malawi have been well documented through various platforms. To realise its vision, the Centre will undertake an in-depth analysis of the challenges prior to suggesting any solutions. In this regard, I plan to organise brainstorming sessions involving relevant key stakeholders within CUNIMA to generate ideas on the pathway the Centre should take. Further, I am aware that unemployment has taken its toll on the majority of our graduates. I believe taking a business-centred approach to training will be vital in this regard. CUNIMA is not alone in providing business management training. As an institute, the Centre will initiate collaboration with partner financial in-

stitutions in Malawi and, where possible, with institutions beyond the borders.

It is well known that the informal market generates the bulk of employment world-wide and Malawi is not an exception. While waiting for reports from the brainstorming sessions, the Centre intends to organise two training sessions in business management in 2023 targeting church groups but also the informal sector. Most of us are aware that the churches and the informal sector contribute immensely to a country's economy and training in business management; consequently, it remains a critical component in the effective running of small, medium and large organisations.

Looking ahead, I want the Centre to be the premier in supporting the interaction between the University and industry. In this regard, the Centre will be a physical and virtual facility that will offer business management services to different groups and to students and graduates who may be interested in starting up entrepreneurial activities.

The next twelve months will be critical for the Centre. As we work towards success, we will be mindful of the needs of church groups, our students, graduates and the informal business sector. To continue with the agenda of the previous leadership on business incubation, the Centre will conduct a survey on how students and the informal sector perceive business incubators. The purpose of the survey will be to help the Centre in its programming of business management services. Within the same time-frame, the Centre will also encourage students from the University to participate in in-house workshops which will be organised to stimulate the thinking on small start-ups.

To the previous director and his team, I am inspired by your dedication and service. I believe it will be the effort of all of us and others to turn the Centre into a success story. God bless you all.

## REPORT ON TEACHING PRACTICE

By Alipo Kaphwiyo (Teaching Practice Coordinator)



*I hear, and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand (Confucius).*

In education, theory has to be complemented with practice. To help its student-teachers understand the skills they have been imparted with for the years they have been with the Faculty of Education, all final year Education students were sent for teaching practice (TP) in various secondary schools across the country. A total of 452 student-teachers that were pursuing diploma and degree programmes in the Faculty joined the 2022/2023 term 1 that commenced on the 10th of October, 2022 and ended on the 16th December, 2022.

### Preparation and Execution

For purposes of quality assurance, preparations for the teaching practice exercise commenced with orientation of supervising lecturers during which supervision tools were checked and expectations shared. This was followed by a student-teacher orientation where the students were informed of their role in the school, and what the Faculty expected of them in terms of professional conduct. It has been a wonderful experience for both the students and supervising lecturers as we manoeuvred through the exciting and challenging exercise. Most importantly, the TP has empowered both students and teachers with insights for the future. From using motorbikes to get to some hard-to-reach schools, to almost spending a night in the car because all lodging places were fully booked – these are some of the adventures TP supervisors had to contend. Nevertheless, we are grateful for the VIP treatment we received from various schools through the gestures and warm welcome. Indeed, we were honoured!

### Student Performance

Overall, our student-teachers have done us proud, and we are delighted with the positive feedback received from various schools. The hardworking spirit instilled by the Catholic University has manifested through their work. In fact, the Faculty has received proposals for partnership with some schools who desire to have an annual supply of our student-teachers. In other instanc-

es, schools are calling upon more student-teachers to be sent to their respective schools on teaching practice. Bravo to all the student-teachers that made it a point to showcase excellence as the fabric they are made of. Their hard work and dedication can never go unnoticed. As the road to success is always under construction, other student-teachers faced challenges in their practice. Some had a hard time settling into the new experience; others had difficulties in showcasing the skills they received from the classroom at the University. We are grateful to the supervising team, who tirelessly assisted such student-teachers to get back on track and constantly reminded them that failure is success in progress. Teaching as a craft surely gets better with experience.

### **Outstanding Supervision**

The Teaching Practice story would be incomplete without registering appreciation for the highly dedicated 31-strong team of supervising lecturers. Their dedication and hard work was un-matched. At least two visits for each of the 452 student-teachers in 7 weeks is no mean achievement. Kudos to lecturers from the department of Education at the Lilongwe Satellite Centre for assisting and doing a great job with student-teachers who were doing their teaching practice in schools in central and northern regions. Many thanks to all the schools that accepted to be part of the professional development journey for our student-teachers and opened their doors for teaching practice. Indeed, it takes a village to raise a child. The mentorship, guidance,

and support rendered to them will surely go a long way. The experience has refined them into excellent professionals ready to serve the country diligently. Last but not least, all thanks to the Catholic University for the financial, material, and logistical support, without which the whole exercise would not have materialized.

### **Come 2023**

We look forward to a more exciting 2023, as numbers of student-teachers going out for teaching practice are poised to increase. The lessons learnt from 2022 will surely make our 2023 experience better. To the new crop of teachers going out into the job market, do not sit by and wait for opportunities to come. Get up and create them! And while at it, manifest the professionalism and hard work that has been instilled in you by your beloved alma mater. Be the best we have trained you to be, and do your 'nourishing mother' proud!



## CALL IT SAINT THOMAS MORE: CHANCELLOR UNVEILS PATRON SAINT FOR LILONGWE CAMPUS OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI



*By Luke Bisani & Stella Zulu*

**T**he Catholic Bishops of Malawi have officially launched the construction of a new campus of the Catholic University of Malawi at Nanjiri in Lilongwe.

Speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony held on 20th June, 2022, the Chancellor of the Catholic University of Malawi, His Grace George Desmond Tambala, has unveiled the Patron Saint of the Lilongwe Campus that is currently under construction. The Chancellor of the University disclosed that

the new campus will have Saint Thomas More as its Patron Saint. The Chancellor said the construction of the new campus in Malawi's capital city Lilongwe is a tangible sign of the growth of the university in the country.

His Grace Desmond Tambala said the Catholic Church will continue to be committed to providing high education stands in the country by not playing a second-class rank on educational matters in Malawi.

“As we mark this important milestone for the Catholic University of Malawi, I would like to challenge those respon-

sible for the education of our sons and daughters to make education matter; to make education bear tangible and lasting fruits in our community,” said the Chancellor.

“As a Church, we pledge to work with the Government and various stakeholders to ensure that we provide a holistic education – education that matters – education that bears good and lasting fruits!” He added.

Concurring with the Chancellor, the Chairman of the University Council, His Grace Thomas Luke Msusa, said Saint Thomas More Campus provides yet another challenge in maintaining the standards of education that the university has been known for at its main campus Saint Montfort in Nguludi, Chiradzulu district.

Saint Thomas More Campus whose first construction works are expected to be completed in 2024 will witness the university having new programmes to be offered to the people of Malawi and beyond.

In his speech, the Vice-Chancellor of the Catholic University of Malawi, Rev. Fr. Dr. George Buleya, disclosed that the search for a campus of the university had been a long process, culminating in the purchasing of 15.5 hectares of land at Nanjiri. He added that the construction of the campus would be conducted in phases. The entire campus is expected to have three lecture blocks, three lecture theatres, three laboratories, one administration block, a two-storey library, a student centre,

a multi-purpose hall, eight hostels, a chapel, and eight staff houses. The cost of the first phase was estimated at K1.5 billion (before devaluation of the local currency), a third of which would be financed by the Catholic University itself while the rest would come from a loan obtained from the National Bank of Malawi.

Established in 2004 by the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM), the Catholic University of Malawi offers diplomas, degrees and Master’s Programmed accredited by The National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) in Malawi

Born on February 7, 1478, St Thomas More was a renowned English lawyer, judge, social philosopher, author, and statesman.





## **SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF UNIVERSITY COUNCIL, HIS GRACE THOMAS LUKE MSUSA, AT THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY**

*[Salutations]*

*It is a great privilege to be present at the Ground-breaking ceremony of the Nanjiri Campus of the Catholic University of Malawi. The choice of Nanjiri as the site for the new campus of the University has been a fruit of communal discernment. Many other locations were considered, but the Lord pointed us to this place on which we are standing today as the more propitious location of our project.*

*Your Grace, Lordships, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen: This morning, I would like to reflect on the importance of personal and institutional learning. For individuals and institutions, learning never ends. Every new project in life contains new opportunities and challenges. It is by embracing new opportunities and challenges that we grow as persons and as institutions.*

*Your Grace, Your Lordships, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen: Having gathered enough experience in primary, secondary and vocational training education, the Catholic Church in Malawi decided, in 2004, to “put out into the deep” (Lk 5:4) by venturing into higher education. Back then, higher education was almost a preserve of public institutions. The challenges were immense: Where would the Church get the human and financial resources to run a private higher education institution? Would such an institution appeal to the higher education market? Over the years, however, through openness to learning, the Catholic University of Malawi has become a model of a self-sustaining institution of higher education. Even more importantly, the University has become a household name in Malawi when it comes to university education. Our student numbers have grown from 127 in 2006 to over 6000 in 2022! Over the sixteen-year period, we have grown our academic portfolio to 34 accredited programmes, including Bachelor of Laws! Today, the Lord invites us to “put out into the deep” yet again by embracing the challenge of geographical expansion. Just as the early Church began in Jerusalem and gradually spread to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), the Catholic University of Malawi has to spread the Good News of quality holistic education from Nguludi to the ends of our country. This is not an easy task, for we have seen how, in history, universities of renown crumbled under the weight of geographical expansion. These are all useful lessons for the Catholic University as she expands to other parts of the country.*

*Your Grace, Lordships, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen: Nanjiri Campus will not simply replicate the programmes offered at the main campus in Nguludi. Rather, the new campus will be an opportunity for the Catholic University to explore new programmes that can better respond to the needs of our country. As Jesus once told his disciples, new wine needs new wineskins! Therefore, we will ensure that a significant percentage of the programmes to be offered here offer new skills and competencies that can tackle Malawi's intractable problems. The introduction of new programmes will therefore constitute yet another learning opportunity for the University.*

*Your Grace, Lordships, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is easy to manage an institution of higher education whose operations are all located in the same place: Resources are easily shared and quality control measures are easy to implement. As we extend our services to a new geographical location, nonetheless, we will be pushed to a new learning frontier with regard to the efficient management of human and financial resources. We have to find ways of ensuring that the quality of education is the same in each and every learning centre. Let it be clear that we are not building a second Catholic University of Malawi! What we are building here at Nanjiri is a campus of the same Catholic University with the same values and standards.*

*On behalf of Management and, indeed, on my own behalf as Chairman of Council, I would like to assure Malawians that the Catholic University will continue to develop its programmes and standards in its commitment to offer relevant, market-driven and game-changing education in Malawi. May God help us in this holy enterprise.*

*I thank you all.*



## THE SPEECH OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI, HIS GRACE GEORGE DESMOND TAMBALA, AT THE GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY, NANJIRI, LILONGWE

*[Salutations.]*

*The beginning of the construction of the Nanjiri Campus of the Catholic University of Malawi is a tangible sign of the growth of our University. We stand here to celebrate the growth of the Catholic University of Malawi. We stand here to remember with gratitude the great visionaries who back in 2004 had the boldness to conceive a dream of establishing this University. We stand here to salute great men and women who, through their labour and sacrifice have lifted the University from its humble beginnings in 2006 to the renown it enjoys today. As the Apostle Paul once reminded the Christian community at Corinth, one person plants, another waters, but it is God who gives the growth (1Corinthians 3:6). The growth of the Catholic University has indeed been a collaborative venture.*

*Your Grace, Lordships, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen: the Catholic Church has from time immemorial regarded education as a great instrument for the evangelisation of the peoples. As Pope Francis has recently made it clear, education is a movement that brings people to light; education has great potential to build the fabric of relationships for a more fraternal humanity. Education is not merely a tool for passing on the traditions of a community from one the generation to another. Education is not simply a platform for transferring information from one head to another. Education cannot be reduced to a system of preparing young and women for the workplace. Education is rather a privileged moment for building up persons so that they may actualise their vocation to become reflective moral agents of social transformation.*

*In our recent Pastoral Letter commemorating the 30th anniversary of Living our Faith, we the Catholic Bishops of Malawi outlined six main objectives of sound education, as follows:*

- to create an environment favourable to the physical, emotional, intellectual, relational and spiritual development of persons;*
- to develop in each student a respect for others and a recognition of civic responsibilities;*
- to promote creative potential of students so that the unique and diverse talent of every individual may be recognised and encouraged;*
- to instil an appreciation of students' own cultural heritage;*

- *to provide students with an appropriate training and skills which will equip them to make a living in the actual circumstances of our country; and*
- *to seek excellence, while aiming to provide education for everyone.*

*Your Lordships, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen: Our country has produced thousands of learned men and women. Some of these have made significant contributions to the development of our country and of the continent of Africa. There are many learned Malawians who are doing great things abroad. There are many learned Malawians who have received international awards for their contribution to academia. Over the years, millions of dollars have been poured into research, conferences and publication on issues relating to our country. Yet, our country continues to experience challenges such as poverty, disease and ignorance.*

*Today, as we mark this important milestone for the Catholic University of Malawi, I would like to challenge those responsible for the education of our sons and daughters to make education matter; to make education bear tangible and lasting fruits in our community.*

*Let me conclude with a word of encouragement to the Management of the Catholic University. The Catholic Church in Malawi is proud of the work you have done at the main Campus in Nguludi. It is our desire that the same spirit of dedication to quality holistic education manifested at the main campus will also be seen here at Nanjiri Campus. Be assured of the prayers and the support of the entire Church as we together spread the Kingdom of God through education.*

*A word to well-wishers: The Catholic Church strives to become a self-reliant Church. This does not only apply to the management of parishes; it also applies to the building and running of institutions such as the Catholic University of Malawi. The project we have launched today will require huge financial resources to complete. I therefore encourage you all to consider donating something to this work of God.*

*May God bless you all.*

## COMMEMORATING THE 30th ANNIVERSARY OF LIVING OUR FAITH

*By Louis Jere (Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor)*



The Catholic University of Malawi organised a conference to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 1992 Pastoral Letter *Living Our Faith* that changed Malawi's political landscape. The conference was held from 15th to 16th December, 2022, at Mpale Cultural Centre in Mangochi. Various lay and religious dignitaries from different dioceses, organisations and institutions graced the event.

In his opening address, His Grace Most Rev. Thomas Luke Msusa, Archbishop of Blantyre and Chairman of University Council, said: The commemoration of the 30th anniversary of this landmark Pastoral Letter is an occasion for the Church in Malawi,

and for the academics in particular, to re-read the 'signs of the times' and see the relevance of this document to the present-day Malawi. This is in line with the call made by the Bishops in the Pastoral Letter as they made it clear that "the issues raised therein require an ongoing and more in-depth reflection." (No. 15).

His Grace invited all Malawians to undertake an examination of conscience in order to ascertain the extent to which the nation has achieved the aspirations articulated by the Catholic Bishops thirty years back, especially with regard to good governance.

The conference was a veritable Festschrift, a feast of papers on various dimensions of the Pastoral Letter – historical context, biblical exegesis, and socio-cultural underpinnings.

The Vice Chancellor, Fr. Dr. George Buleya, kickstarted the presentations with a paper titled "Historical and Hermeneutical Context of the 1992 *Living Our Faith* Pastoral Letter." He unpacked the characteristics of a pastoral letter as a literary genre, differentiating it from other ecclesiastical documents such as Apostolic Exhortation, Encyclical, Motu Proprio, and a pastoral statement. He situated *Living Our Faith* in remote, proximate and immediate historical and ecclesial contexts.



Dr. Henry Chingaipe's paper, titled "From Oligarchy to Kleptocracy Via Democracy: Three Decades of Living Our Faith in Malawi," undertook a candid assessment of Malawi's political performance after the 1992 Pastoral Letter. Using conceptual frameworks drawn from the social sciences, he demonstrated how Malawi had moved from the rule by 'a few' (oligarchy) to a rule by 'thieves' (kleptocracy).

Dr. Mzee Hermann Mvula, from the University of Malawi, presented a paper titled "The More the Delay in Justice for Crimes Committed, the More Increase in Wickedness: A Reflective Analysis of the 1992 Pastoral Letter," in which he related the Letter's passionate call for justice to the Old Testament's provisions for social justice.

The fourth paper was presented by Rev. Fr. Dr. Alfred Chaima, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi. The paper was titled "30 Years of Living Our Faith: Malawi That Has Changed and Not Changed". The paper compared pre-Living our Faith Malawi with present-day Malawi to highlight the country's gains and losses over the 30-year period.

Mrs. Sainala Kalebe & Mrs. Chimwemwe Kandodo, both lecturers in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Catholic University of Malawi, co-presented a paper that focused on "The Church and Political Leadership in Malawi." They painted a broader picture of the political context of Living Our Faith. The paper

made it clear that the political developments in Malawi were supported by international and global trends stemming from the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

The Director of Academic Affairs, Rev. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani, SJ, presented a paper titled "'The Emperor Has No Clothes:' Power Distance and the Limits of Free Speech in Malawi". Using Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the paper traced the evolution of power distance in Malawi in relation to free speech, from pre-Cabinet crisis days to post-1993 Malawi. Edukans Malawi's Dr. Limbani Nsapato gave a paper titled "A Reflection of the Education Sector in Malawi 30 Years After the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter of 1992." Leveraging data drawn from various authoritative sources, the paper made it clear that the nation had made significant strides in some aspects of the education system and had reversed its gains in others.

Dr. Justine Mangulama, senior lecturer in the department of Development Studies at the Catholic University of Malawi, focused on the land question in Malawi. His paper, "Access to Land and State Responses in the Last 30 Years: The Case of Communities Living in the Tea-Growing Areas in Southern Malawi," reflected on the challenge of landlessness as a case of injustice, in Malawi's southern districts of Thyolo and Mulanje.

Rev. Fr. Dr. Boniface Tamani, Vicar



General of the Archdiocese of Blantyre, reflected on “Equality as a Guiding Principle” for Living Our Faith. Harnessing insights from Western philosophy, African philosophy and the Bible, the presenter argued that the Pastoral Letter basically called for a more equitable distribution of resources so that all human beings could live a more dignified life.

Dr. Gerard Chigona’s paper, “Ambivalent Public Sector Response to the 1992 Pastoral Letter,” explored the evolution of Malawians’ response to pastoral letters over time. He observed that, the excitement and anticipation with which the first generation of pastoral letters were received had gradually petered out, partly due to the increasing predictability of the content and cadence of pastoral letters. He therefore invited the Catholic Bishops to explore alternative channels for socio-political intervention. At the conclusion of the conference, the Catholic University presented two awards: one to Montfort Media, the other to Rt. Rev. Allan Chamgwera, the only surviving bishop behind the controversial 1992 Living Our Faith Pastoral Letter. Montfort Media received the award for the commendable and courageous role played by the media house in publishing the Letter. In his acceptance speech, Director of Montfort Media Fr. Piergiorgio Gamba, SMM, acknowledged that the opportunity to print the pastoral letter was a turning point for the media house. He then invited the Catholic University to consid-

er organizing a similar event in 2023 to commemorate the 1993 referendum.

During the closing ceremony, conference participants encouraged the Catholic University to continue organizing academic events that reflect on and disseminate the enduring message of the Gospel. In his response to the invitation, the Vice-Chancellor reported that the University was working on a flagship research project on all pastoral letters of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi from pre-independence days to date.

## I HAVE COMPLETED THE RACE: REVIEWING MY CONTRIBUTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS UNION



*By Vinetia Kamulete*

*Veni, vidi, vici.* I came, I saw, did I conquer? Leadership gurus speak of a leadership cycle consisting of five stages: leadership awareness, leadership development, leadership maturity, leadership reinvention, and leadership decline. But I prefer to reflect on my leadership journey using the Gartner Hype Cycle framework: trigger, inflated expectations, disillusionment, enlightenment, and plateau of productivity. My journey as President of the Students Union started in November 2021, brandishing a change management manifesto. The goals I had set myself include: sourcing scholarships for needy stu-

dents; improving coordination among students and their leadership; creating a gender-based-violence-free environment for female students; and, most importantly, promoting student career growth through internships and mentorships. The desire to enhance the welfare of students at the Catholic University is what had triggered my decision to run for the highest office in the Students Union. The energy was palpable, the expectations high and perhaps inflated. My team set to work immediately to realise the above objectives. We quickly plucked a few low-hanging fruits such as securing schol-

arship for needy students from Plan International and improving the sports sector by purchasing gym equipment. We also managed to achieve harder-to-reach milestones, including co-financing the Student Centre. Despite these achievements, there were a number of things that seemed to get stuck in the mud of disillusionment. For instance, it was difficult to align students with our agenda. Sometimes the leadership of the Union and the student body seemed to sail in different directions. These were learning moments for me and for my team. One of the best and memorable moments of being President was my trip to Botswana. I was chosen by All African Students Union to represent Malawi on a project called digital inclusion campaign at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat in Botswana. Being a Student Union president has grown me mentally and socially. I have learned to be patient and humble. I have also improved my communication skills. I leave the office a happy person. I am most grateful to my leadership team: Ireen Tembo, Vice President; George Golosi, General Secretary; Atupele Sadala, Treasurer; Chris Jalakasi, Administrative Secretary; Ted Kandoje, Executive Officer; and Nerza Ibrahim, Publicity Secretary, to mention but a few executive members. Without them, I would have not registered even a quarter of what I achieved during my term. I am highly indebted to the University Management for the support they rendered to my team. I urge the Vice-Chancellor and his assistants to continue prioritizing the welfare of students. My advice to the new leadership: Focus on good communication amongst yourselves, with students and with management. Above all, never take your eyes off the ball of student welfare. My advice to students: Love and respect one another; above all, exert yourselves in your studies.

## LIVING FOR OTHERS: EMBRACING THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD THE STUDENTS UNION



By Innocent Kuthambo (President)

“If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship, he would keep it in port forever,” observed an acclaimed theologian, Thomas Aquinas. In a world characterized by what some have described as leadership crisis, it takes a good measure of courage and perhaps foolhardiness to jump into a leadership pool infested with the crocodiles of underperformance and public scepticism. It is

widely believed that, in the 21st century people generally do not trust their leaders. And here I am, taking up the leadership of the Students Union at the Catholic University!

Here is why I ran for President. It has been my enduring conviction that leadership is all about serving people, being a person for others. Leadership scholarship is replete with



numerous theories jostling for acceptance. But when all is said and done, leadership boils down to one word: giving. It is not about knowing more than others any more than it is about having more than others. Leadership is about giving one's shoulder to those overburdened by the yoke of life's challenges. And there are many challenges at the Catholic University!

Over the years, I have had opportunities to serve the Catholic University community in the following capacities: senior class representative, chairman of the Catholic University Seventh Day Adventist Club (CUSDAC), president of the Catholic University Education Student Association (CUESA), and vice-president of the Catholic University Student Welfare Committee of the Students Union. It is my hope that these positions have prepared me for the top position in the Students Union. Nonetheless, I am ready to scale the learning curve, step by step.

A recap of my manifesto. As President, I am committed to attending to the welfare of all students through the Students Union Welfare Committee. The activities of the various departments of the Students Union have largely lacked coordination. My presidency will therefore work toward synergizing different departments of the Union for greater effectiveness and efficiency. It is also my desire to see to it that needy and deserving students are empowered through scholarships, to complete their studies and become productive citizens in society.

Due to the saturation of the job market, many graduates, including those from the Catholic University, find it difficult to land a meaningful job. This challenge can partly be addressed through platforms that link students with industry. With the support of University Management, I will initiate career growth activities to enhance the interaction between students and the industry.

The last focus area is community outreach. The Catholic University is surrounded by villages and other institutions. As members of the University, we cannot afford to live in 'splendid isolation' the community around us.

In his homily at the 2022 Graduation Mass, Bishop Martin A. Mtumbuka challenged the Catholic University to make a difference in the lives of the people of Masikini Village. As a student leader, I take that call seriously and will ensure that students embrace the joys and sorrows, hopes and fears of the local community and impact the lives of men, women and children wallowing in poverty and other social ills.

I draw great inspiration from the work of Mrs. Jenipher Mbukwa Ngwira, Head of Special Needs and Inclusive Education Department at the Catholic University. Though life handed her an opportunity to follow a gleaming career path in geography, she chose to channel her energies to the empowerment of people with disabilities. Through her lectures, publications and community outreach, she has been a staunch advocate for the education of children with disabilities.

As one committed to serving others, I am aware that this office can take a heavy toll on my academic and social life. And there is one way to ensuring that this leadership position does not jeopardize my studies: self-discipline. As a student leader, it is incumbent upon me to make some adjustments to my schedule in order to make room for the new tasks entrusted on me.

On team work, I heed the counsel of the great African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.” I cannot do much without the support of my colleagues in the Students Union leadership. Yes, together we can!

## MOULDED LIKE A CLAY VESSEL: REFLECTIONS ON MY STAY AT CUNIMA



*By Agnes Wizi Kambala (former lecturer, HoD and Interim Dean – Social Sciences)*

**2**022 has brought a major change in my life... I call it major because unlike most of my friends, this is only my second time experiencing this change. Having rendered my services to the God and to mankind through The Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA) since 11th July 2011, time has come for me to move.

I joined CUNIMA as a Staff Associate in English and Communication Studies. A year or so later, I was awarded the prestigious Ruth First Educational Trust scholarship to study for an MA in International Social Work Studies at one of UKs oldest and top universities, Durham. (I will share my motivation for switching from languages/communication to Social Work in a later post)

I rejoined CUNIMA on 2nd February 2015, this time around as a lecturer in Social Work. During my years with CUNIMA, I grew in many ways than I can count. I learnt to be committed in my work. For the record, Catholic institutions are best known for hard work. CUNIMA is no exception. I met fellow lecturers who took their primary mission of teaching (they say lecturing?) seriously. I am grateful I became just that! .

CUNIMA made me realise my potential as a leader. I served as a coordinator for the Bridging Program for about seven cohorts, Head of Social Work Department for 2 years and 2 months, and Interim Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences for 6 months, three of which

were in my notice of resignation. As a leader, I was able to experience first-hand what I taught my SOW 2232-Leadership and Community Work students, that leadership is not a title, but a process of inspiring others, and maximising their efforts towards the attainment of a desired goal.

So many people think by virtue of being a private institution, CUNIMA enrolls only those from wealthy families. In my journey, I have met countless students who applied to CUNIMA simply because the public (and cheaper) university space could not absorb them. Some of such kids with extremely good MSCE grades, come from very poor households- others even have siblings in public universities where they equally struggle. All they want is an education! So when I hear people making uncensored remarks on why Loans Board extends the facility to private unis, I know they don't have this background. After all, the students graduate as specialist teachers to serve some of the marginalised learners in our public schools, nurses to care for the sick in our public hospitals or social workers to provide countless services to people in need in our communities.

Did I digress? I hope not.

I can write a volume about my experience at CUNIMA. I am delighted I came into contact with some exceptionally intelligent students, supervised a good number of intriguing undergrad research papers, mentored some towards post-grad opportunities and exchange programs, and led students on a number of "give back" initiatives.

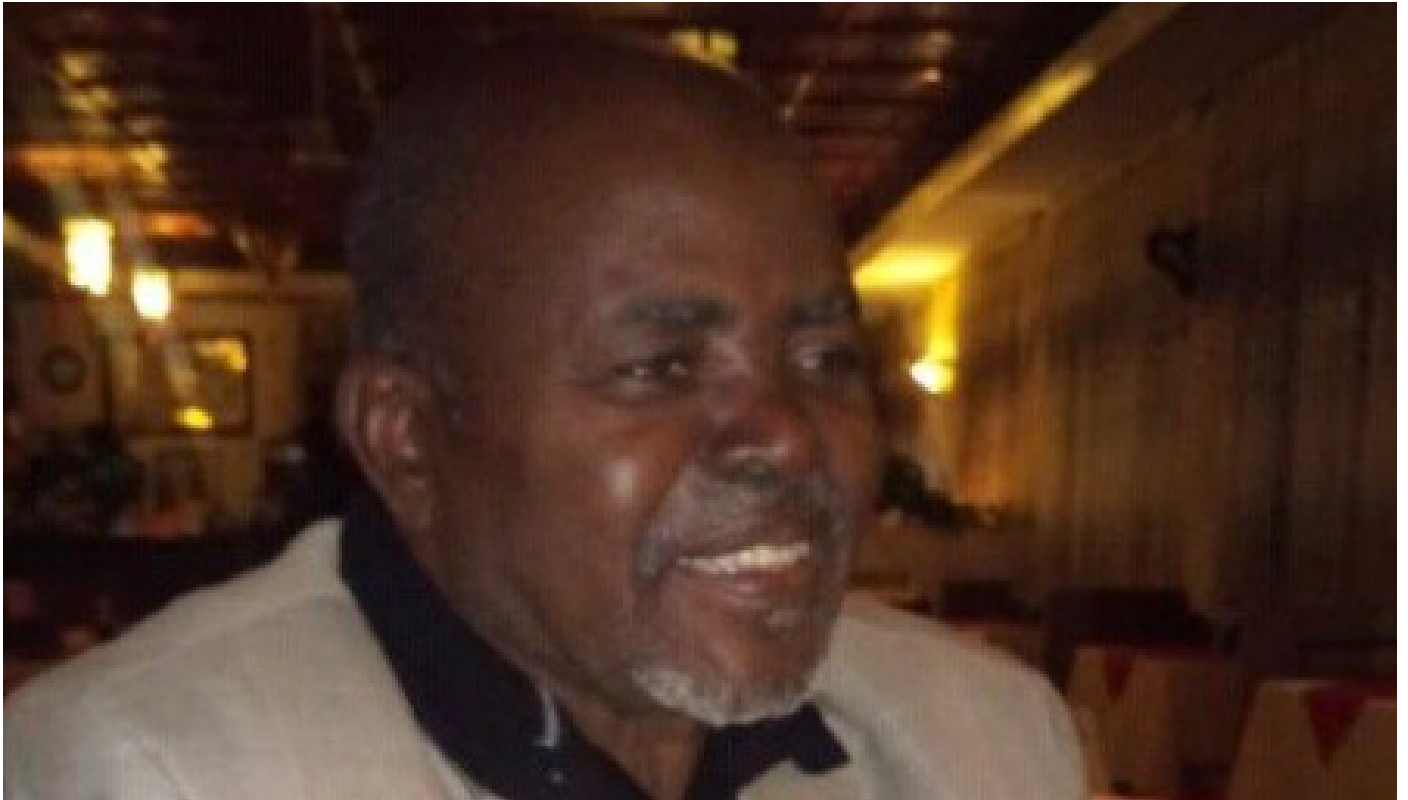
I will surely miss the community where I made so many friends. I will live to cherish the connections made. Beyond the friendships made within the institution, I have gotten connected to the world. I am proud of local connections with different agencies where my students did Social Work field practicum or got an employment, and international connections through academic visits and writing.

I will fondly miss Eucharistic Celebrations during the General Assembly that marked the beginning of every new semester. Those moments always brought me closer to the Father. In his homily during the last service that I attended in August 2022, the main celebrant Fr. Charles Duncan spoke straight into my life, on the roles that I have as a facilitator of the learning process. I remember him emphasising on some behaviours that are not fitting for someone who takes up the teaching profession. My fervent prayer is that I should always do the desirable as I continue to render services to mankind.

Now, a new chapter is here: back to my alma mater, to continue with the expedition. I can only ask God to lead the way.



## INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR JAMES EDWARD CHIPETA



After serving the Catholic University of Malawi for many years, Professor James Edward Chipeta decided to retire in December, 2022. The Marketing and Publicity Officer, Luke Bisani (LB), had a conversation with Prof. Chipeta (Prof) on his contribution to the University and other matters.

*LB: Good afternoon, Prof. Please, share with us your personal details – your full name, family background, educational background, and professional journey.*

**Prof:** My name is James Edward Chipeta. I'm married and have two fully grown kids and a number of zidzukululu (grandchildren). I went through secondary school at Box 2 (Zomba Catholic Secondary School) in Zomba and finally went to the United States of America for my degree in 1964 to 1968, came back

and joined the University of Malawi where I worked for several years. I started in the administration of the University of Malawi as an administrator, eventually being the first Malawian registrar of the Polytechnic [a constituent college of the University of Malawi]; and I was at the Polytechnic for twenty-eight years. But then after I went for my Master's – again in the United States, at Miami University, in Oxford, Ohio – when I came back, the University of Malawi had other suggestions for my professional career. I was moved to the academic side, as head of the management department at Poly, which we turned into a management centre, training supervisors from industry and public sector.

**LB: From Poly?**

Prof: Eventually, at Poly, as an academic now, I rose to become Vice-Principal of the Polytechnic. In 1996,

I was recruited to be the University of Malawi registrar; so, I moved to Zomba, where I was for four years. In the year 2000, I retired from the University of Malawi but soon after that, I was invited to join Chancellor College (another constituent college of the University of Malawi) to teach in the political and administrative studies department where I was coordinator of the upgraded human resource management programme. So, I was at Chancellor College for eight years. When I left, that's when I was invited by the Catholic University of Malawi to come and help spearhead the launch of the Faculty of Commerce.

***LB: Precisely when did you join the Catholic University of Malawi?***

Prof: I joined the Catholic University of Malawi in November, 2010. At that time, we started by developing curricula for four degree programmes: Accountancy, Business Administration, Marketing, and Banking and Finance. We were the first university in Malawi to offer a degree programme in Banking and Finance. And we had three months in which to prepare the curricula as well as the detailed syllabuses for the four programmes. So, by February, 2011 we started offering courses at the Catholic University.

***LB: What was the shape of the University then in terms of staffing, departments, programmes, student population and infrastructure?***

Prof: We've got more faculties now, but that time we were few; in fact, we were considered the youngest faculty, the first being the Faculty of Education, followed by the Faculty of Social Sciences, and then the Faculty of Commerce. Most of the others have come after us. I'm glad that we started all the programmes at the same time. Although Accountancy had started a year earlier under Social Sciences, we took it over and developed new programmes under it, so that by February, 2011 we had a full-fledged faculty with four programmes.

***LB: Apart from being one of the founders of the Faculty of Commerce, what other contribution have you made to the Catholic University?***

Prof: Certainly, I spearheaded the launch of the Faculty of Commerce and I was the first dean of the Faculty, and I was dean for some eight years. When there were more of us, including younger professionals in the Faculty, I felt we should allow a younger, more energetic person, to take up the leadership of the Faculty. And I was very happy to see Fr. Philip Mbeta accepting to be dean after me.

***LB: What are the most memorable moments you have had here at the Catholic University?***

Prof: In a way, I spoke briefly at the reception that we faced challenges, especially in Banking and Finance, because we were the first university in Malawi to

offer such a degree programme. So, we had challenges finding lecturers, people who were prepared to accept to work for us. This was a real challenge. So, for the first time we were allowing part-timers, mostly banking professionals – some of them were really senior people in the banks – who accepted to help us; and they would come at night. So, we initially had night classes for Banking and Finance because there was no other way. And because of the difficulties we were experiencing in attracting permanent staff for Banking, we were considering redirecting students in the Banking programme to other programmes in the Faculty. However, we had one determined female student who refused to change to other programmes, arguing that she had chosen Banking and had been selected for Banking, and therefore she wanted to graduate in Banking. That forced us to continue sourcing lecturers for the programme until she graduated. We are thankful that Mr. Beyard Namale [Head of Department, Banking and Finance] accepted to come and joined the Faculty to head and teach in the Banking and Finance department.

***LB: How has the Banking and Finance programme grown from the time you had this first student to now?***

Prof: We have carried on; bankers were content to prepare their working staff to get a diploma from the Institute of Bankers. But when we introduced a degree programme, clearly this was a new horizon, as it were, and, eventually, they could see that they could not simply rely on the diploma programme at Poly; and Poly itself upgraded their programme and started offering a degree in Banking. After that, we introduced a new department of Human Resource Management, thereby bringing the number of programmes in the Faculty of Commerce to five.

***LB: We understand that you have been here for twelve years. Have you had any regrettable moments during your stay here?***

Prof: I'm not so sure I can dwell on regrettable moments. Certainly, the University has achieved a lot and the Faculty has grown considerably. If there are problems at all, I can mention that the number of students has grown tremendously, and offers new challenges and the need to expand staffing. Unfortunately, the recruitment of staff seems to be slow in comparison to the growth of students. I always offered a foundation course in general management. In the last year that I have served, we had about three hundred students in the first year. To teach a class of three hundred was really a challenge. While I could deal with two hundred or less before, this time – for the first time – I had to have someone to assist me, so that we had two lecturers covering the three hundred students. It worked well; it was an experiment; it was a learning process for me and I think it was a learning process for my colleague as well. Fr. Santos Mpingu has been wonderful in helping to manage the large numbers of students.

***LB: Leveraging your vast experience, what do you think the Catholic University should do to improve its performance as an institution of higher learning in Malawi?***

Prof: Eventually, obviously, the growth of the university and the institution is to develop postgraduate programmes, especially because at that level there is a little more research that goes on, not only from students but also from staff. That's the only thing that I believe we should be doing. We can decide on the quality or type of Master's programme that we need [in the Faculty of Commerce]. The popular one is, of course, is MBA [Master of Business Administration], but it can be a general MBA or it can be a specialised MBA, but I think that's the way to go. I would recommend that.

***LB: What is your advice to staff members and students of the Catholic University?***

Prof: Students certainly need to put in a little more commitment to their work. One thing that I have observed among students is that even when I have tried to encourage them to seek advice and support from me as their lecturer, many of them preferred not to come. And when challenged, they would say, 'No, we have study groups.' Unfortunately, the way these study groups work is that many of them will come under the influence of somebody who appears to be more dominant in the group, so that at the end of the day I have noticed that when members of the group make a mistake in answering a question, all members of the group make the same mistake. That shows that they are dependent on listening to somebody, even when they have not challenged the quality or even the correctness of what it is they are following. So, students need to improve on that one. As for staff, I can only recommend that they continue to dedicate themselves and offer leadership to the students in a more meaningful way.

***LB: We understand you are retiring. What are you moving on to after your many years at the Catholic University?***

Prof: Yeah, maybe too many years! I'm well over seventy years. So there is not much else you can do except go home and do some farming!

***LB: Where exactly?***

Prof: My home is up in Mzimba. We have already started [farming] in a small way to remain active. It's nothing at a grand scale but it's something that will keep us busy.

***LB: Any other thoughts you would like to share with us?***

Prof: At the moment, no, thank you.



## FROM OUR AFFILIATE INSTITUTIONS

The Catholic University of Malawi has three affiliate institutions: Inter-Congregational Institute (ICI) in Balaka; St. Anthony's Major Seminary (Kachebere) in Mchinji; and St. Peter's Major Seminary in Zomba. ICI and Kachebere offer a degree programme in philosophy, while St. Peter's offers a degree in theology.

### INTER-CONGREGATIONAL INSTITUTE (ICI)

Fr Isaac Kimu Mpokwe, OCD (ICI Dean of Studies)

Inter-Congregational Institute (ICI) is an affiliated institution of the Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA). It is situated at Sosola village, T.A. Msamala, Balaka District. The institute runs a philosophy programme accredited by the National Council for Higher Education. The programme is followed mostly by students who are pursuing priestly formation in the Catholic Church. Philosophy is a pre-requisite for Theological studies. The programme also prepares lay students to work effectively in many sectors of life.

#### First Semester

A number of activities have happened during 2022-2023 academic year and many more are to happen. Here are some of them. The first semester opened on 22nd August 2022 with Holy Mass presided over by Fr Dr Mennas Mukaka, rector of the institution. The semester registered 115 students. The non-clerical students are 12. There are also 4 novices of the Sacramentine Sisters following some religious courses as part of their formation.

Lectures began on 23rd August, 2022 and finished on 18th November, 2022. This was followed by three weeks of examinations. The first semester finished with a week of spiritual retreat for religious students. The retreat was preached by Fr Charles Kaponya, a priest from Mangochi Diocese.

Curriculum                      Review                      and                      Development

The review of the philosophy programme has jointly been done by ICI and Kachebere Major Seminary. The final document has been submitted to the Catholic University for onward processing. Apart from the philosophy programme the Institute is working on a new degree programme in religious studies. The programme is in its final stages and

will soon be forwarded to Catholic University for approval and later submitted to NCHE for accreditation. It has been created in response to a need for a more in-depth, holistic and relevant religious formation in Malawi. The wish of the institute is to start enrolling students into the programme next academic year.

### **Philosophy Week**

There will be a philosophy week from 27th February to 3rd March 2023. The themes for the week are 'gender issues and economic crisis.' Kachebere Major Seminary will be invited on one of the days for a philosophical discussion. This is one of our efforts to enhance collaboration between the two institutions.

### **Returning Staff**

ICI joyfully celebrates the return of one of its lecturers, Fr Dr Badola of Comboni Missionaries, who had gone off for doctoral studies. We congratulate him and wish him well as he rejoins the formation and intellectual community at ICI.

### **Infrastructure Development**

At its meeting of 23rd November, 2022, the Board of Governors approved the construction of a multipurpose hall, two lecturer rooms and administrative offices. As the Institute is growing conducive space for learning and administration also needs to grow. Efforts are underway to raise funds for the construction of these facilities.

### **Wisdom**

I conclude with the words of Ludwig Wittgenstein: "Where one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". Let 'silence' be now. May the Lord continue blessing ICI, staff members and the students.

## ST. ANTHONY'S MAJOR SEMINARY, KACHEBERE

*By Fr. Emmanuel Ichidi, PSS (Dean of Studies)*

St. Anthony's Major Seminary, popularly known as Kachebere, offers a bachelor of Philosophy and is affiliated to the Catholic University of Malawi. The study of philosophy is a fundamental aspect of priestly training as it orients and introduces the student to rigorous analysis of arguments, development of truth values, and an appreciation of the diversity of moral perspectives. Added to this, studies in the history of philosophy are included to give the learner a broader understanding of the history of ideas, especially those that confront the human person. Emphasis is made on the applicability of ancient thoughts in modern-day life; for example, there has been a surge in rediscovering the thoughts of stoic philosophy as a tool for facing the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Theoretical philosophy through the studies of epistemology and metaphysics is also a significant characteristic of philosophical training. This facet enhances the learners' skills of conceptual thinking and deliberation in the mundane day-to-day activities of our lives, merging the relationship. The ability to make a synthesis between faith and reason is one attribute that is crucial in confronting the challenges that religion poses in our society. Through medieval thoughts, the student is introduced to the ancient old problem of marrying religion and science, or what is commonly referred to as faith reason.

The studies also add an anthropological perspective as it is a given that they live with other people. The study of the human person is therefore an essential component of this training. As such studies in psychology and human development, anthropology and sociology are central to the curriculum in that they help the learner evaluate the human person from an anthropological perspective.

In all the courses which the students have to undertake for three years, we have highlighted a specific skill (s) that the student after accomplishing a particular course should be able to actualize that skills as a way to emphasize and implement the relevance and practicability of the knowledge attained specifically from that particular course as well as to help a student understand the diversity pragmatic nature of philosophy training as a whole.

Furthermore, from what they learn in different courses, the student is allowed to do practical activities whereby on Saturdays, they go for the weekend aposto-

late, which enables them to encounter the real-life stories of the communities and be able to make on-the-ground pastoral reflections. At the end of the academic year, they go into parish communities, which gives them a heuristic perspective of philosophy. Moreover, at the end of semester two, the students of years one and two will be going for practicals in their respective dioceses and archdiocese.

They will be required to carry out different activities, services, and responsibilities for what will be assigned to them. In doing so, they have to transform their speculative knowledge to the real-life application of philosophy in day-to-day activities and applied philosophical principles. All these will also be assessed through presentations when they return for the new academic year through their presentations and offering some marks and in doing so giving credits.

The seminary grounds also give a favorable and apt ambiance to pursue philosophical studies. The classrooms are spacious and equipped with technology pertinent to modern-day learning. There is a huge library with many resource books relevant to research. An e-library has also been installed which helps both learners and lecturers to be up-to-date with recent publications and developments in their respective fields.

Philosophical symposiums are a salient feature of the degree program at St. Anthony's Major Seminary. Every month, students and lecturers meet to discuss one aspect of philosophy and how it relates to the challenges of Malawi and the global world. This allows the student to understand the practicability and relevant philosophy in our daily endeavors.

Moreover, we have established a 'Student Information System' (SIS) as a platform that incorporates both students and lecturers having their profile for the intellectual formation and academic development. Through the SIS, the student can access their progress report and request the statement of results, certificates of diploma, and transcripts for the degree. The SIS also provides a platform where the students can access the course outlines, assignments, provisional guiding lecture notes, and recommended materials such as books, articles, and journals for their respective courses, all these are easily accessed by the students.

Likewise, the lecturers through their profiles in SIS can create and monitor the registered students in their respective courses. This also provides an opportunity for the lecturers to monitor the student's academic progress, because every lecturer account also has the system capacity to access the student's progress in his or her course as well as general performance. This provides a lecturer with a fa-



avorable ground to advise and journey with the student in his academic formation.

Additionally, the SIS system has a feedback mechanism that allows the student to do course evaluation which is one of the fundamental aspects for progressing teaching and learning. Students can evaluate the way a course has been done through the template that has been formulated in the system. This aspect provides the lecturer with feedback from the students and, in doing so, allows a lecturer to have a general view of his or her lecturing methods, approaches, and methodology. Hence, it provides both holistic feedback on areas in which the lecturer has done well and at the same time the areas which need improvement. This becomes the homework for the lecturer always to aim high in actualizing his or her potential in offering the training to the students.

Lastly, the student is given opportunities to engage in manual work through involvement in livestock keeping, poultry rearing, horticultural production, and orchard production. This provides them with the actualization of holistic education at the end of their philosophy program.

## ST. PETERS MAJOR SEMINARY

### Duc in Altum

*By Fr. Francis Bonongwe (Dean of Studies)*

St. Peter's Major Seminary, located in Zomba, Malawi, is an inter-diocesan offering a five-year formation programme for candidates to the priesthood from all dioceses in Malawi. Ever preoccupied with the formation of future priests, the Catholic Bishops of Malawi founded the seminary, which first opened its doors in January, 1977. Hence, the seminary has been in existence for 45 years now, and in five years' time, we will be celebrating its golden jubilee.

### **Putting out Into the Deep**

The motto for the seminary is *Duc in Altum*, Latin for "put out into the deep" (Lk 5:6), the words that Jesus said to Peter when he first encountered him, prompting him to go into deep water and lower his nets for a catch. The theology brewed at St. Peter's – understood as faith seeking understanding – is tailored to help the seminarians not only to deepen their faith, but also to help them in the imitation of Christ as *alter Christus* (another Christ).

### **Intellectual Hospitality**

Owing to the missionary and universal nature of the Church, the seminary has further opened its doors to other congregations who have desired to have their seminarians trained at this house of formation. Apart from training seminarians who prepare to become diocesan priests, for instance, the seminary presently offers training to seminarians belonging to religious orders like the Capuchins and Missionaries of Mary Immaculate (MMI).

The overall objective of the seminary is to provide a thorough human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation so that the seminarians may become zealous pastors in the service of Christ, his Church and its mission in the world today. In particular, candidates are being invited to take seriously their mission as future priests in the Church and in her evangelizing mission.

### **Academic Year**

We opened the 2022/2023 Academic Year on 1 October 2022 with a total of 110 seminarians, among whom 7 belong to the Order of Capuchins while one belongs to the Missionaries of Mary Immaculate. There are 10 resident priest teachers and formators and 22 support staff.

The academic year is divided into two semesters. The sessions of instruction are divided into courses and seminars. Writing of theses, semester papers and class presentations, seminars and workshops are integral parts of the programme. The first semester runs from 1 October 2022 to 3 March 2023, while the second semester will run from 6 March 2023 to 15 July 2023. Therein we shall break for Christmas on 16 December and for Easter on 31 March 2023. Within these two semester blocks, there are further activities that mark the life in the seminary like the Welcoming Day (12 November 2022), Candidacy for Theology I (26 January 2023), Ministry of Reader and Acolyte (16 March 2023) and Diaconate Ordination (20 May 2023).

### **Fully Human**

On the journey to priesthood and in priestly life itself, there are four dimensions that interact simultaneously: the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. Firstly, human formation helps the seminarian to develop his personality after the model of Christ, the perfect man, given that the divine call engages and involves the concrete human person. In this sense, human formation promotes the integral growth of the person, and allows the integration of all its dimensions, that is, physical, emotional, psychological, relational/social, aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual.

Secondly, spiritual formation is the foundational call to discipleship and conversion of heart. Formation as a journey of discipleship is anchored on listening, learning and accepting the mission. It is stated that those who want to become priests after the example of Jesus Christ must learn to draw close to him in prayer, meditation on the Word, celebration of the Eucharist and divine office. Spiritual formation, therefore, is aimed at fostering the spiritual life of the future priest through the spiritual activities of the Church.

Thirdly, the intellectual formation takes different dimensions that expose seminarians to the different facets of the ministry of Christ to the world, hence endeavouring to make them true shepherds of souls after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd. The purpose of academic formation in the seminary, therefore, is to equip seminarians with the education which will enable them to proclaim the gospel with clarity, understanding and diligence in the Malawian context with its multi-cultural diversity.

Fourthly, pastoral formation is geared towards forming seminarians into “good Samaritans”. The formation of a pastoral character in the seminarians will help them to acquire the inner freedom to live the apostolate with a spirit of service

and able to see the work of God in the hearts and lives of the people. At St. Peter's, pastoral formation exists at different levels. Candidates are assigned different apostolates in the nearby parishes and institutions while in the seminary. When they go for the long holiday, their respective dioceses again post them to various parishes. At the end of their second year of theological studies, they go for one year pastoral experience in their respective dioceses. Upon their deaconate ordination, they start going to their assigned parishes for weekend pastoral work.

Seminarians are also engaged in various kinds of services within the seminary community such as animal husbandry, fish farming, chicken rearing, and vegetable growing, to mention a few. This is to encourage them to appreciate manual work and self-reliance. Borrowing a famous dictum from the Benedictine Spirituality, *ora et labora* (to work is to pray or work and pray), the seminarians take part in caring for the common home through manual work. Through manual work, not only do seminarians help to make their own home habitable, but also help in a concrete way to provide seminary necessities by their own hands.



## FROM OUR ALUMNI

***VOLUNTEERING AT TREE OF LIFE WHILE BUILDING AN AGRIBUSINESS STARTUP******By Oscar Kambwembwe***

Having graduated with a Bachelor of Accountancy on September 24, 2022, I stepped into the job market with great confidence, knowing that I had studied at one of the best universities in the country. Armed with my degree certificate, I embarked on a job-hunting adventure. However, almost all the organisations I applied to demanded some work experience, which requirement put me at a great disadvantage since I was a fresh graduate. While waiting for opportunities, I decided to volunteer as secretary at Tree of Life Assembly International Christian Centre (TOLAICC). My involvement with TOLAICC has broadened my horizon and has helped me to expand my social network. By God's grace, I recently landed a job at Graham Carr in Blantyre where I serve as Assistant Auditor.

I have also been working hard to develop a start-up known as AFRIM, which I co-founded with two other Catholic University graduates. AFRIM is an agribusiness start-up currently located at Thondwe in Zomba. Our mission is to increase the supply of good-quality organic meat. The nascent entity started operations in 2021 and has made significant strides in terms of production and sales. The start-up is an opportunity to test the relevance to the local context, of the many entrepreneurship theories we learned in class. As the saying goes, experience is the best teacher.

I believe that we alumni are the bridge between the university and the industry; as such we have the responsibility to open up opportunities for others who are still in the womb of the University. I also believe that, to use a Christian metaphor, we are ‘sacraments’ of the University – a visible and tangible embodiment of the Catholic University in the world. As such, it behoofs us to preserve the majesty of the Catholic University by serving the nation from a place of selflessness and integrity. At the same time, during this transformative stage from a student to alumni, I think some form of career support from the university could be of vital importance. One possibility is to extend open library access to alumni, to help us to keep improving and updating our knowledge in this rapidly changing world.

Lastly, I would like to thank all my lecturers for their guidance and encouragement which made me aim for the best. O hail to you, our Alma Mater!

## CHASING THE DREAM OF BECOMING AN EMPLOYER

*Collins Chikalipo*



Choosing to study for a Bachelor of Business Administration with CUNIMA will forever remain one of the best decisions I ever made. My intellect was enriched, my hunger for knowledge satiated, and my sense of purpose strengthened. Four years down the line, I came out a very different person with one purpose in mind – to help Mother Malawi escape from the snare of poverty and to take a few steps up the ladder of development.

But the pressure was always there, especially given the unemployment curve not showing signs of flattening. But by the grace of God, plus my excellent grades, I landed a rewarding job at TotalEnergies, the oil industry market leader. However, I would be a fool to claim that my future is secured, for the highway of life is littered with potholes of uncertainty. As the United Nations Development Programme's 2021/2022 Human Development Report candidly states, ours are uncertain times and unsettled lives. That said, I subscribe to Michael Brody-Waite's self-leadership principles: be authentic, do the uncomfortable work, and surrender the outcome.

My ultimate desire is to evolve from employee to employer, and CUNIMA equipped me with the intellectual capital to do so. Granted, it will not be easy but I will put in every calorie in my energy tank to realise that dream. As an alumnus, I believe there is a lot that I can do to contribute to the CUNIMA society. But the most fundamental is offering insights based on experience gleaned



from the industry. One of the gaps I have already noticed in our education system is that there is not enough emphasis on developing marketing skills. The truth, nonetheless, is that we human beings are always marketing something: ourselves, an idea, a product. To succeed in life, we all need to master the art of selling. Let me conclude by registering my profound gratitude to the Alma Mater. The Catholic University is indeed a place “where young minds grow and old ones are rejuvenated, as the CUNIMA anthem says.

## A FASHION-SAVVY RED CROSS YOUTH LEADER

*By Benjamin Lawrence Njiru*



I studied for Bachelor of Social Science, majoring in Social Work and minoring in Community Development. 24th September, 2022, our graduation day, was paradoxically filled with excitement and fear of the unknown. As we held victory flowers in our hands, posed for photos and hugged our ever-supportive parents, friends and relatives, we could not complete quiet the drum of anxiety deep in our hearts regarding the next step. Looking at life from the post-graduation vantage point, I can comfortably validate the Chewa proverb, “Sikadza kokha, kaopa kulaula”. One has to constantly be on the lookout for opportunities. And that is what I have been trying to do after my graduation.

My life after graduation has been packed with activities and opportunities. To be-



gin with, I started volunteering with Malawi Red Cross Society as Youth Chairperson of Lilongwe Division/District. Over the past few months, I have been involved in sensitization campaigns on Polio, COVID-19 Vaccine and Psychological First Aid. I also play a significant role in Zone Youth Network under DYU as Public Relations Officer (PRO). In addition, I work as Hospital Ombudsman and Research and Investigation intern at the Office of Ombudsman Headquarters.

Further, I am a fashion model, and in 2022 year I attended three runway fashion shows, one of which was at an international level. When cholera reared its ugly head recently, we leveraged the power of fashion to promote hygiene. These activities have exposed me to a battery of opportunities: I have enjoyed a stint in government internship and have attended the 6th edition of International Youth Conference (IYC) themed “Service. Lead. Innovate,” organised in a hybrid mode live from New York City and Cambridge-MA, USA. Thanks to my participation in this conference, I am now a certified IYC Ambassador.

However, life after graduation has not been a bed of roses. I have encountered significant challenges securing a stable salaried job since I graduated. Starting my own business has been difficult due to lack of financial capital.

It is my conviction that CUNIMA alumni have a big role to play in strengthening student support systems at the University. For instance, we can create a platform where we can offer mentorship to our brothers and sisters about to graduate, in order to prepare them for the challenges of post-college life. It is all about managing expectations and developing skill sets for handling whatever life throws at you after you have returned the gown.

## CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

## THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY ANGELIC CHOIR: SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

*By Innocent Masiye*

If proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten, as Chinua Achebe says in *Things Fall Apart*, liturgical music is the sauce with which worship is consumed. Those who have read *Things Fall Apart* will remember Nwoye, Okonkwo's son, who was drawn to the Christian faith not by the complex ratiocination of Christian dogma but by soul-searching hymns sung in church. As the novel says, "It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow. The hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and in fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that haunted his young soul—the question of the twins crying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed." The mission of the Catholic University Angelic Choir is precisely that – to translate the 'mad' logic of Christian doctrine into captivating music which even the unlettered can consume. This is not an original idea at all – St. Hilary of Poitiers and St. Ambrose of Milan experimented with the evangelising power of music many moons ago.

### Some History

The Angelic Choir traces its origins to 2006, the year the University opened its doors to the first cohort of students. By then, the student population was small. Victor Magalasi was the first choir master of the Catholic University Choir. The choir animated various university functions, such as General Assembly Eucharistic celebrations and Graduation ceremonies. The pioneering team recorded four songs one of which was titled *Ndidzatamanda Ambuye* ('I will sing praise to God'). Like a mustard seed, the choir has over the years grown in membership. As I write this article, the group boasts more than 50 talented and energetic members.

### Recording and Launching an Album

The choir embarked on an ambitious project of recording an album. Thanks to the support of various stakeholders, mostly from the Catholic University of Malawi, we managed to record a ten-track album bearing the title *Ndidzatamanda Ambuye*, a title borrowed from one of the songs recorded in 2007 by the pioneering team. Among the songs in the album are *Mzimu Woyera*, *Ndidzatamanda Ambuye*, *Pansi pano* and *Tsiku lomaliza*. The album was recorded at Elephant Studio and the sound engineer was the legendary Paul Teputepu. Some of the songs are now on video. Many lessons have been drawn from the project: team work, persistence, humility and generosity!

Led by Christopher Jackson, the Angelic Choir launched the album on 29th May, 2022 at St. James Chilomoni in Blantyre. The event, well patronised by people from all walks of life, was an opportunity for the Angelic Choir to showcase its talent and to evangelise the community through music. The Choir is deeply indebted to scores of people whose financial assistance made our dream come true. May God bless you all!

### **The Music of Charity**

It is easy to sing about God's love. However, translating evangelical words into action can be challenging. The Angelic Choir decided to walk the talk of love by reaching out to the community, both within and outside the University. Since charity begins at home, the Angelic Choir extended a helping hand first to needy students within the walls of the University. Leveraging the financial resources derived from album sales and the launch, the Choir bought items such as food, toiletries and stationery. These assorted items given to financially challenged brothers and sisters at the University. We are grateful to Fr. Kondwani Mwenegamba, the University Chaplain, who, through his pastoral interactions, identified the rightful beneficiaries and helped us to execute the charity work from a place of humility, ensuring that the dignity of the recipients was preserved. Later, the choir visited infirm and aged members of Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary (S.B.V.M) at Maryview in Nguludi. The group bore gifts consisting of various items. Even more importantly, the Angelic Choir entertained the ailing nuns with songs mostly from the new album. In return, the Sisters inspired us with words of wisdom and taught us many lessons with their lives. Among them was the virtue of long suffering, following the example of Christ the Suffering Servant.

### **The Challenge of Flux**

Many years before the birth of Christ, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus reflected on the impermanence of reality. Like water in a river, things come and go. The Angelic Choir experiences the challenge of impermanence in a profound way. Members of the choir come and go after completing their studies, sometimes leaving no trace of their existence, except for a voice captured on tape and mingled with many other voices. With high membership and leadership turnover, it is sometimes difficult to establish a 'brand identity' that can endure over time. Our colleagues at the University of Malawi (erstwhile Chancellor College) seem to have found a solution to this problem by coming up with what they call CHANCO Alumni Choir. We too are exploring that possibility.



## CUNIMA DRAMA GROUP MESMERIZES BLANTYRE ARTS FESTIVAL

*By Vincent Chafulumira*



*CUNIMA Drama Group performing on the stage*

Three members from CUNIMA Drama Group stole the show with their enchanting poems during 2022's Blantyre Arts Festival that took place at Njamba Freedom Park in early October.

Blantyre Arts Festival is a gala that celebrates artistic works from various Malawian artists. This year, the event was celebrated under the theme, "Climate Resilience through Cultural Preservation."

As part of the commemoration, the Catholic University of Malawi Drama Group was party to the proceedings. As expected, various artists displayed their works in line with the theme for 2022.

The enchanting poetic performance of CUNIMA's students ignited fire and elicited a big round of applause. One of the students, Mirriam Boat, recited "Because I'm a poet". This was a philosophical litany that revealed the agony Mother Earth was experiencing due to poor environmental practices leading to climate change. In her poem, Boat "reiterated calls for all and sundry to honour the dignity of Mother Earth by covering her nakedness with vegetation. One of the lines said it all: "Bring back respect by covering my nakedness". The poem also called



upon every citizen to take active roles in championing environmental preservation.

Mbumba Banda's *Whoosh Whoosh Whoosh* articulated calls for environmental preservation from a cultural point of view. She reminded the audience of the scintillating natural beauty that Malawi possesses: from Lake Malawi to the green tea estates in the south and beyond. Her poem argued that restoring pride in Malawians (of their rich natural heritage) was the best tool for combating climate change.

Patience Mulungu and Gladys Mkwamba echoed Banda's sentiments in their poem, "Tales of our Heritage", a poem that vocalizes Mother Malawi's lament over the cultural erosion whose negative effects cannot be overemphasized. The poem, waxing nostalgic, takes the listener to Malawi's bygone days characterized by green landscapes and harmonious co-existence between creation and the human community. "Tales of Our Heritage" then drives you into the chaotic life of the modern-day Malawi.



*Mbumba Banda reciting her poem*

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI**