

## ***Induction Week at PUR and the Integration of New Students to Itorero, 22<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017***

The kickoff of the new academic year 2017-2018 at the Protestant University of Rwanda took place from 20 up 22 October 2017. **The Devotion** opening the ceremony was done by Rev Juvenal Rwamunyana, chaplain and Dean of the Students. Meditating out of Psalm 122, Rev Rwamunyana developed the benefit of coming together of churches that funded the Protestant University of Rwanda, through the unification of their efforts. The same effort he recommended for PUR academic community, ancient and new students, academic and administrative staff to cooperate and to share in duties, responsibilities but also resources; to share ideas and knowledge; to spend time sharing unto work in groups so as to grow, expand and flourish in blessings. Without cooperation, he said, there is no progress; but cooperation is only possible when love prevails.

**Welcome Remarks by Vice Chancellor-** The Vice Chancellor of PUR, Prof Elisée Musemakweli welcome remarks emphasized the same topic of ***coming together and insisted on the Christian principles*** of the Protestant University of Rwanda. Being a Christian university means that PUR found its work on the knowledge and respect of God, which are the fundamentals of the Holy Scripture tradition key to protestant faith. However knowing God would be useless if we don't put into practice and communicated God's love. As a Christian university, a church institution, PUR is at the cross road of the mission of translating into action knowledge to help all academic community, foreign and nationals to be at the same level of understanding and to feel at home.

### **Major activities of PUR introduced to New Students**

**Directorates-** PUR holds at high esteem the mission of a university, teaching, researching and disseminating knowledge. Directorate of Quality Assurance, the Directorate of Research; The office of the Registrar; the Directorate of Library and ICT; the chaplaincy and deanery of students. In addition, the PUR has three faculties, namely the faculty of theology and religious studies, the faculty of education, the faculty of development studies. Respective directors and deans of faculties introduced their activities. For all work regarding the quality of teaching, the adequacy and coherence of teaching, the programs fitting or workload harmonization; the accreditation of programs and other related matters, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic is [Rev prof ViateurNdikumana tel :0788270893] and the Director of Quality Assurance [Dr Penine Uwimbabazi, tel :0788642148] are the respective interlocutors for staff, students, and other stakeholders.

**Research Activities-** PUR pursues quality research in social sciences to sustain teaching activities and the services to community. Research at PUR reposes onto country, church and society needs for society to bring about changes to society. All researches at PUR are done to sustain education, to improve innovation. The Directorate of research coordinates all research activities, collective and individual for the staff and faculties, for students and external scholars looking for close cooperation

with PUR; it organizes public conferences, research the cooperation. During each the academic year, the Senate gives a topic for collective research activity, both for staff and students even external scholars culminating in a three days conference during which the findings are presented, commented, later edited and published . For 2016 researches were undertaken on the topic: Home Grown Initiatives: Reconciliation and Reconstruction of Rwanda; in 2017 the researches were pursued on the same topic. The Directorate organizes as well public conference with external scholars sharing knowledge of areas of their expertise that are relevant to PUR academic activities. PUR also cooperate with external universities and scholars on issues of national and international concern. Recently completed studies include: “Corruption and change of norms in East Africa”; “Informal Governance and Corruption. Transcending principal agent and Public action”, jointly conducted with the University of Makerere, the University of Dar-es-Salam; the University of Nairobi and the Basel Institute of Governance; research completed comprise as well : “Church Governance: Principles of Transparency, Accountability, Participation, etc. Where do the churches stand”?; “Diaconia in Protestant churches”; underway are: Law Fee education; China cooperation and Africa [funded by EU]; Genocide, Memory and Reconciliation in cooperation with the University of KwaZulu Natal, and many other topics. The Directorate of research organizes an annual competing on Reading and Writing Campaign. Students read and criticize articles published by the teaching staff in the PUR Series Publication and laureates are rewarded Laptops, scholarships etc. The director of research [ Prof Tharcisse Gatwa tel : 0787885538] is the respondent to any matters regarding research activity.

***Faculties and Programs***- For 2017-2018, PUR will offer 12 programs at Bachelor level. All these programs introduced by the deans of the three faculties [Theology and Religious studies; Education and Development studies] include: Education Planning and Management, School Psychology; Business studies, Geography; History, Kinyarwanda, English; Protestant Theology; Rural and community development, Peace building and development; Urban management; Natural Resources and Environment management.

### ***Integration of New Students into Itorero***

The Rwandan universities have adopted a new model of welcoming new students. Instead of following the older path of “kunyuzura”, a practice that consisted in abusing the new students by the older once for days and even weeks, a traumatizing process that would leave some students handicapped by the violence, the universities in Post genocide Rwanda have adopted a model of extending warm greeting and integration of new students. Ceremony is organized by the university with the presence of the academic community and stakeholders of education. Older students introduce to their young brothers and sisters the life at the university , take them through the difference clubs [Peace Club, Itorero club; Debate club; Youth for Christ club; international students fellowship; choirs, etc] and they give them rook to draw their own *Imihigo*, performance contract of studies and research to achieve during their academic journey.