

In addition, as a theologian, he holds a prominent place in contemporary theology, with important contributions in various fields, including central questions of fundamental theology and aspects of social and political morality.

An Interview Granted to the Website of *Strathmore University* (May 15, 2018)

Strathmore University congratulates you on your election as Prelate of Opus Dei and, thereby also as Chancellor of this Academic Center. What was the vision of Saint Josemaría for Africa and specifically Kenya when he sent the first members of Opus Dei who started the Strathmore A-Level College in 1961?

Kenya was the first country in Africa to receive faithful of Opus Dei, in 1958. That is why Saint Josemaría always looked at your nation with great affection. He prayed a lot for Kenyans and for Strathmore. He hoped that his daughters and sons, who had arrived there to carry out their professional work, would become good citizens of the land that had welcomed them. He wanted Strathmore College to be interracial: in the management team, in the faculty and in the student body. “Because there is only one race,” he

liked to say, “the race of the children of God.” That is why Strathmore is, in a way, a place where one has to learn to live like this, as children of God.

What are your expectations for Strathmore University as we celebrate 10 years since it was awarded its charter?

I hope that this anniversary will be an opportunity to open up to a yearning for truth. This is an attitude very much in keeping with the university spirit and is what Saint Josemaría wanted – and later Don Alvaro and Don Javier – for people who work in this field. Being open to the whole world, eager to serve and share the best you have.

Strathmore’s charter was awarded in 2008, at a time when Kenya was greatly divided after the 2007 post-election violence in the country. What is your take on the University’s Christian orientation and foundational values that emphasize charity and unity, as is clearly spelt out in its motto “Ut omnes unum sint”?

Unity is not improvised. It is an asset, a great good based on the willingness to help others and avoid making a big deal about differences, no matter what they are. This motto, therefore, is a basis for further work and also a goal to be reached. Unity is a daily conquest: a struggle to appreciate and respect differences and to learn how to ask

for forgiveness. And at the University people are taught how to build society on this foundation. Pope Francis, during his visit to Kenya, encouraged people to work with integrity and transparency for the common good, to say no to corruption and to foster a spirit of solidarity in all areas of society and especially with those most in need. Difficulties, for a Christian, are rather challenges, because we always have God's grace and encouragement to contribute to improving relationships among people, even if we take our own limitations as our starting point.

In following Saint Josemaría's message on the universal call to holiness while carrying out ordinary work, what is your advice to the staff working in the University in order to foster excellent work and uphold high human standards at all times?

The history of Strathmore University can be a source of inspiration: over the years it has grown from a small academic institution to a university. The stature of the university depends on your commitment to try to work hard and to work well, to carry out each task with human perfection and with love for God. In that sense, the key lies in the heart of every teacher, every employee, every student and every manager. By fostering an effective desire to help others and to find God in their ordinary work, this work – whatever it may be – is always relevant. Hence the impor-

tance of putting love into one's work. It is something simple and, at the same time, supernatural.

Technological advancement has spread rapidly in the world, and Kenya has not been left behind. What advice would you give to students, who need to balance being tech savvy with being truly human?

I would tell them not to be afraid to exercise their freedom in projects that are worthwhile. Technologies contribute a great deal to life, but one also needs to “disconnect” in order to interact, face to face, with others. On the other hand, the future of the country and, perhaps, of other nations, depends on the students who are now being trained.

What advice would you give to professors who use technology to teach and carry out research and should guide young people in cultivating meaningful family and social relationships?

Technical means contribute to improved performance in research work. At the same time, they are simply means, that is, instruments that allow us to attain an end. Therefore, a good professional tries to use them with a prudent measure so they do not distance him or her from others. The consequence of this attitude is the positive influence of the teachers on the rest of the university, especially on the students, who will be the leaders of society in a few years.

How does one find God amid the noise of social media?

One can learn to communicate with God in many ways. For example, going to the chapel or spending some time every day praying with the Gospel. A necessary mode of “access” is the sacraments, especially Confession and the Eucharist. With the power of God’s grace, we work and live in the company of the Lord amidst the noise of the factory, the classroom, the streets or the countryside.

Saint Josemaría loved working with the disadvantaged and marginalized in society. What insights would you give to those working on projects in community outreach, in order to be more effective? What role does the University play in assisting the development of the economy of our country?

Opus Dei first grew, Saint Josemaría often said, in the poor neighborhoods of Madrid, because he found God’s strength in those who were sick or suffering. The priority of the individual spurs Christians to take an interest in each person. The Pope recalled – for example in the recent Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate* – the need to live with understanding, affection, and true concern for those around us, inviting them to live the teaching found at the end of chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew. It is about seeing Christ in others. The initiatives to help the needy promoted in Strathmore

are a concrete way of trying to live like this.

Looking ahead to the future with the foundational years behind us, what is the most important contribution you expect Strathmore to make in this region and in Africa?

A university of Christian inspiration contains the potential remedy that society needs: human values, the will to contribute to the needs of the country and to culture, training the professionals of the future. And, above and beyond that, a place where, within the personal limitations of each one, an effort is made to try to give every student, every person who works here, the opportunity to feel very free and very responsible. Many great things depend on their lives and on the good they actually do around them, for others and for God.

An Interview Granted to *The Times*, London (June 9, 2018)

Interview by Tom Kington

What have you achieved in your first year and what are your plans for upcoming years?

I think that having completed this first year has been quite an