

Foreword

The Catholic University of Zimbabwe Growth and Development Strategic Plan 2013-2022 gives pride of place to research as one of the university's three key activity areas alongside teaching and service. St. John Paul 11 articulated the Catholic University's research agenda in Ex Corde Ecclesiae as follows:

*A Catholic University ...is immersed in human society.... It is called on to become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society. Included among its research activities, therefore, will be a study of **serious contemporary problems** in areas such as the dignity of human life, the promotion of justice for all, the quality of personal and family life, the protection of nature, the search for peace and political stability, a more just sharing in the world's resources, and a new economic and political order that will better serve the human community at a national and international level. University research will seek to discover the root causes of the serious problems of our time... If need be, a Catholic University must have the courage to speak uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society (St. John Paul 11, 2009).*

The senior management team of the Catholic University of Zimbabwe (CUZ) launched its research programme at its annual strategy retreat in Bulawayo in January 2016 by formally establishing the Research Board and allocating a percentage of its annual budget to research.

It is from that programme that the current edition of the CUZ Journal, The Fountain: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, emanates.

While the Journal takes a cue from St. John Paul 11's injunction for a Catholic University's research agenda as indicated above, the current edition, while interdisciplinary in coverage, addresses only a few of the many aspects of contemporary society and human life that St. John Paul 11 articulates. Subsequent editions of The Fountain will address equally pressing issues of contemporary society, including some which may focus on what St. John Paul 11 calls "*uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society.*"

It is my pleasure to invite you to enjoy reading the current edition!

Professor Ranga Zinyemba

Vice Chancellor and Rector