

Dr the Hon LAM Ching-Choi, BBS, JP

Council Chairman Mr Rex AU YEUNG, President Prof Leonard CHENG, Honorary Fellows, Lingnanians, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, I am deeply honoured to be awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Lingnan University. I am also very pleased to deliver this speech on behalf of fellow awardees – Mr Larry KWOK Lam-Kwong, Ms Helena LO Yin-Ying (LAW Lan), and Ms Candy CHEA Shuk-Mui.

Lingnan University has enjoyed a long history. As early as in 1888, the American Presbyterian Church founded the Christian College in China in Guangzhou, inaugurating the educational services that became the precursor of Lingnan University in China. The College was re-named “Lingnan University” in 1927, with Dr CHUNG Wing-Kwong as the first president. When Prof CHEN Xujing took over the presidency in 1948, he created an excellent academic environment recruiting renowned professors including CHEN Yinque, WANG Li, LIANG Fangzhong and RONG Geng, who were all prominent academic figures described as “national treasures” in those days, to teach at Lingnan. Informed by the best of Chinese and Western traditions, Lingnan University’s liberal arts education is time-honoured and the fruit of the collective efforts of numerous educators over the course of history. It is my pleasure to be part of the Lingnan family as the University enters the 51st year since its re-establishment in Hong Kong.

I sense a strong cultural atmosphere every time I walk into the University campus. Literature, history, and philosophy are integral components of the education offered here. The writer LUNG Ying-Tai once said, “Literature and art allow us to see behind the surface of reality, and perceive a different form of reality that is closer to the core of our existence. In this form of reality, we not only experience the profoundness of rationality, but also an intuitive discernment of ‘beauty’. Beauty, in itself, is also a form of reality that is akin to the core of our existence.” Every time you pick up a book, you explore the world through words, and your heart echoes with the reality that the book presents. Reading a book is more than flipping pages—it is also an act to be carried out. As WANG Yangming, a philosopher from the Ming Dynasty, once said, “When personal desires get in the way, a person can no longer turn thoughts into action. Knowing and doing are inseparable. Knowing but not doing is, in essence, the same as not knowing at all”. We show what we have learned by the actions that we take. Our pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty is beyond the boundaries of books, and should also transcend time and space.

At the 50th Anniversary of Lingnan University’s re-establishment in Hong Kong, Lingnan University and the Lingnan Education Organisation published two books, titled *50 Years of Lingnan Spirit* and *The Old Spirit in a New Setting—The Hong Kong Story of Lingnan University*, which trace the history and development of Lingnan over half a century, with the aim of passing on the “Lingnan Spirit”. Today, the torch of the Lingnan heritage, bearing the hopes and dreams of generations of Lingnanians from the past to the present, has been passed to our hands. These two books record and elucidate the University’s motto “Education for Service”.

For many years, “serving society” is a tenet I hold deep in my heart. I was born in the 1960s and had experienced poverty as I grew up; I witnessed the development of Hong Kong during the 1970s and 1980s; I had been through the changes that came along in the 1990s and 2000s. Yet, my aspiration to serve the public has never changed. Throughout the changing times, Hong Kong has risen to global prominence, facing more and more opportunities and challenges. In this world where we must always keep advancing to avoid the risk of regress, we need everyone to pull in their efforts, as exemplified by the outstanding fellow awardees today. Mr Larry KWOK Lam-Kwong’s distinguished achievements in the legal field as well as public and social services, Ms Helena LAW Lan’s acclaimed performance in the film and television industry, and Ms Candy CHEA Shuk-Mui’s exceptional contributions in the sector of broadcasting and public welfare—all are great examples that the younger generation can emulate.

Finally, let me once again, speaking on behalf of Mr Larry KWOK Lam-Kwong, Ms Helena LAW Lan, Ms Candy CHEA Shuk-Mui and myself, dedicate our sincere thanks to Lingnan University and the Council for presenting the Honorary Fellowships to us. Our thanks also extend to those who have given us support and encouragement.

Thank you very much!