

# **Professor Frederick Ma Si-hang GBS, JP**

## **DOCTOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCES *honoris causa***

### **Address**

Council Chairman Mr Bernard Chan, President Leonard Cheng, members of the Council, distinguished guests, teachers and students:

On behalf of this year's honourable doctorate recipients, I would like to express our gratitude to Lingnan University for conferring such a prestigious honour on us. We know very well that this great honour is in recognition of our modest contributions to the society of Hong Kong. We take great pride in being "Lingnanians", and shall continue to devote ourselves to the future development of Hong Kong and the educational endeavours of Lingnan University.

I would like to take this opportunity today to express some personal views. Here with us is another group of young graduates. In your university life, you have learned to respect others' rights and views; and to strengthen interpersonal relationships on the basis of mutual respect and mutual trust. You will also bring along the Lingnan spirit of "exploring knowledge and inspiring thinking" to a new chapter of your life. Here you have my best wishes that you will become the elite of Hong Kong and the new momentum for social progress.

Imperceptibly, 41 years have passed since I graduated from university. Along the journey of my life, I have learned a lot of principles and gained many experiences in finding my place in the world. Among them, the most important thing is to learn to respect those who have contributed to our lives.

During my first year at university, there was a young lecturer widely respected and admired by most students. In the past several decades since graduation, we have been keeping in touch with this teacher. When he retired in 2007, we organised "A Thank You Banquet After 37 Years in Appreciation of Our Teacher" to pay our respects, and established a distinguished lecture series in his name. This highly respected and admired teacher was the former President of Lingnan University Professor Edward Chen. Today invited by Lingnan to attend this Congregation, I feel once more his contribution to the University and to Hong Kong's higher education.

One of Lingnan's educational premises as a liberal arts university is a broad-mindedness that tolerates different opinions and respects the diversity of Chinese and Western cultures. Only when we respect others can we win others' respect. Loss of mutual respect also means loss of mutual trust, and society will then be torn asunder by irrational confrontations, while basic human dignity will be senselessly trampled on. Allow me to share with you two experiences about respect here:

Three years ago, I was invited by a university to join a dinner gathering with its students. On that occasion, I asked a student which secondary school he graduated from, and he said: "My school isn't a prestigious one, you probably haven't heard of it. No need to mention it." For the following ten minutes, I gave this student a "lecture", telling him that he should always remember where his blessings come from, and should respect and love his teachers.

I was upset because this young man neglected the daily, often unseen efforts of his teachers and principal, and even the caretakers at his school. I graduated from New Method College which was then labelled as a "bad boys' school", yet I've always been proud of my alma mater. Without the guidance and nurturing of the teachers there, I definitely won't be where I am today.

My second personal experience took place while I was serving as Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury. At a Legislative Council meeting on sales tax, the long-haired legislator

the Hon Leung Kwok-hung entered the Chamber holding a funeral couplet with the words “Yingnian zaoshi” (meaning “died at a young age”), cursing both me and the then Financial Secretary Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen. As a Legislative Councillor and a veteran politician, his behaviour shows disrespect not only for others, the Legislative Council and himself, but also for voters’ expectations of a legislator’s fulfilment of his duty. Legislative Council is a solemn place where all members should express their opinions respectfully and debate democratically. There is a famous dictum by the French enlightenment philosopher Voltaire: “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” Yet, in recent years, some members who claim to be guardians of democracy have severely damaged law and order in society as well as the solemnity of the Legislative Council. They threw bananas, shoes, drinking glasses, and even shouted vulgar and insulting language at other members who held different political views. They respect neither themselves nor others, and, what is more, violate the principle of genuine democracy.

Only when we learn to respect others can we have a humble heart to see others’ merits and our own inadequacies in good faith. We should not endlessly inflate ourselves into the most important people in the world, unable to tolerate others’ criticism. Respect is the cornerstone of all social systems. When social decorum collapses, law and order cannot be maintained, and social systems will fail to operate effectively. Born and bred in Hong Kong, all of us certainly hope that Hong Kong will flourish harmoniously and sustainably. To me, the key lies in one word – respect. Respect yourself and others will respect you. Only when we have mutual respect and seek common ground while preserving differences can we establish mutual trust and facilitate communication. And only when we communicate can we reach consensus, and give Hong Kong a promising tomorrow.

Pardon and correct me if there are any inadequacies in my personal views above; and if you find them useful, let us do better together. Thank you!

# 馬時亨教授 GBS, JP

榮譽社會科學博士

## 謝辭

尊敬的陳智思主席、鄭國漢校長、各位校董、各位嘉賓、各位教職員和同學：

本人謹代表本屆獲頒授榮譽博士學位的人士，向嶺南大學致以衷心的感謝。我們深知大學給予我們這份崇高的榮譽，代表認同我們過去對香港社會作出的微薄貢獻。我們以成為「嶺南人」深感自豪，並將一如既往繼續為香港的未來發展和嶺南的教育事業盡一己之綿力。

本人希望藉著今天這個機會，表達一點個人看法。今天，又一批年青朋友畢業了。你們在大學生活中，學會了尊重別人的權利和意見以及在互重和互信的基礎上促進人際關係的發展，並將帶著“探求知識，啟迪思維”的嶺南精神進入人生的另一個新階段。我在此祝願你們能成為香港的精英棟樑和社會進步的新動力。

我不經不覺已經從大學畢業四十一年了。在人生路途上，我學會了很多立身處世的道理和經驗，而其中，我覺得最重要的是要懂得尊重在我們生命中作出過貢獻的人。

我大學一年級的時候，有一位年青的講師廣受同學們的尊重和敬愛。我們畢業後幾十年來，一直與這位老師保持聯絡，更在 2007 年他退休時舉辦了「尊師重道，37 年後的謝師宴」以及成立了以他命名的傑出學人講座，向這位老師致敬。這位深受我們同學尊重及敬愛的老師正是嶺南大學的前校長陳坤耀教授。今天應邀來到嶺南大學出席你們的畢業典禮，再次感受到陳教授對嶺南大學和香港專上教育事業的貢獻。

嶺南的博雅教育理念，是尊重中西文化的多元性和包容不同意見的寬宏大量；當你懂得尊重別人，才可贏得別人尊重。如果人與人之間失去了尊重，亦同時失去了彼此間的互信，社會就會被非理性的對抗撕裂，人的基本尊嚴會被無理踐踏。容許我在這裡與大家分享兩個在尊重方面的經歷：

我在三年前獲邀請參加一所大學的學生飯聚。我當時問一位同學在哪一間中學畢業，他的答案竟然是：「我畢業的學校名不見經傳，你不會認識的，不要講吧！」接著這位同學便聽我講了十分鐘，做人應飲水思源、要尊重及敬愛他的老師的「訓話」。

我動氣因為這位青年朋友忽略了所就讀中學的老師、校長甚至校工們默默耕耘所付出的努力心血，在他生命中作出的貢獻。我中學畢業於在當時被喻為「飛仔學校」的新法書院，我一直以我這間母校為榮，因為如果沒有母校老師的悉心教導與栽培，我肯定沒有今天。

我第二個親身的事例是當我還在政府擔任財經事務及庫務局局長時，到立法會為銷售稅一事開會，當時長髮披肩的立法會議員梁國雄，在進入立法會會議廳的時候，高舉輓聯詛咒我和當時的財政司司長唐英年「英年早逝」。在政壇打滾了多年的梁國雄身為立法會議員，行為不但不尊重他人、不尊重立法會、不尊重他自己，更不尊重選民對議員履行職責的期望。立法會是一個嚴肅莊重的地方，所有議員都應以尊重的心態進入會場各抒己見、民主議政。法國啟蒙思想家伏爾泰有一句至理名言，「我不同意你的觀點，但我誓死捍衛你說話的權利。」但近年來有多位以民

主衛士自居的議員對不同政見的人士掙蕉、掙鞋、飛杯，甚至高喊粗鄙、侮辱性言詞，嚴重破壞社會綱紀及立法會莊嚴；他們的所作所為既不自重，亦不尊重他人，更違反了真正的民主理念。

懂得尊重，才會有一顆謙卑的心，誠懇包容地看到別人長處的同時，又看到自己的不足，而不是不斷無限放大自己，覺得自己才是世界上最重要的人，容不下別人的批評。若社會對制度失去了賴以為本的尊重，禮樂崩壞，綱紀不張，社會制度就很難繼續有效運作。我們都是生於香港，長於香港，當然希望香港可以和諧而又持續地發展。對於我來說，箇中的關鍵亦不外乎尊重兩字，人必自重而後人重之。如果大家都能相互尊重、求同存異，才能建立互信，有互信才能彼此溝通，有溝通才能達成共識，我們的香港才能有一個美好的明天。

我以上的看法純屬個人見解，如有不足，希望各位有識之士包容指正，如有可取之處希望與各同學共勉之，謝謝各位。