

The Standard

UCU COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

The Standard is published bi-monthly by the UCU Department of Mass Communication

Our view

Get more skills

We congratulate our brothers and sisters who have graduated today. There is no doubt that this is a life-long achievement for them and their parents who have carried the burden of paying the rising education costs.

However, the graduates should bear in mind that they are a tiny fraction of the jobless graduates from the over 20 universities in this country. And the number is rising every year. Those graduating need to lower their expectations for getting the kind of jobs they desire because those jobs are not there. The awards today recognise that they have over the past three years or so got the requisite knowledge to enable them chart out a future.

They have a number of options. For some of them, it might be necessary to go for specialised training in a particular branch of their field of study, depending on the likely demand for those skills. A graduate of Economics and Management might need to get trained in project monitoring and evaluation and a course specialised in computer packages relevant to a specific area of the intended career.

A graduate of Social Work and Social Administration, on the other hand, might find it crucial to have specialised training on refugees management. We live in a region with millions of refugees and there is a need for people with the requisite skills to handle both their physiological and psychological needs.

Some graduates might find that they need basic skills such as driving, catering, carpentry and electrical fitting. Other graduates may need to go for apprenticeship. Graduates of Mass Communication, for example, need rigorous internship, which they hardly get elsewhere during undergraduate studies. At *The Standard* for instance, we give skills and hands-on training to those intending to join the print industry. This kind of training is hardly got elsewhere. This is because we have the commitment to transform interns into first-class professionals which every print media house yearns for.

As we have said before, the era of ready-made white-collar jobs is long gone and every graduate must understand that university education equips them with the skills to cultivate job opportunities.

CONTACT INFO:

Epajjar Ojulu - Supervisor/Managing Editor

eojulu@ucu.ac.ug

Johnson Mayamba - Staff Writer / News

editor@ucu.ac.ug

Fynne Ayebazibwe Amoko - Staff Writer / Campus

news_campuslife@ucu.ac.ug

Melody Kukundakwe - Staff Writer / Lifestyle

lifestyle@ucu.ac.ug

Frank Isabirye - Staff Writer / Sports

sports@ucu.ac.ug

Standard News Office: Ext. 879 & 213

<https://www.facebook.com/ucustandard>

<http://thestandard.ucu.ac.ug>

Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion Opinion



We can avoid loneliness of our single lives at home by coming here more often

What if singleness and the joy it can give is just for you?

THOMAS FROESE



Last time in this space we were talking about marriage, how good things come to those who wait, and about falling in love with our Creator, really, the One who knows us better than we know ourselves.

I shared that I was 35 before I met my wife and how there was something to this, something mysterious and with joy, the sort that you can't contrive because it comes from a deeper place inside but also somehow outside of you too.

Even so, some days I wonder what in the world life would be like if I was single again, not because I don't love and enjoy my wife and children – I do very much – but simply because any of us have an imagination and I suppose mine is as good as any.

This is when I chafe and bristle, because the hard truth is that to live as a single in a religious community is not easy. In fact, it can be a harrowing experience, especially for older singles, people often misunderstood or tolerated at best, pitied or even despised at worst.

Yes, as a long-time single you might get sideways glances. You must be a saint, so holy as to walk in mid-air. Or no, you must be the opposite, a sinner so carnal that you must secretly jump bed-to-bed.

Or maybe you're more a personal project that needs help. "Just

wait a bit longer," you'll be told by well-meaning Christian friends. "God is still preparing you for that special someone." Of course, I heard this myself, and, in more thoughtless moments, have probably said it to others.

Thoughtless because the patronizing and hurtful, if not subtle, message is that singleness is a condition to be solved. You're a second-class believer, still maturing, still being prepared for God's ultimate plan, which must be, of course, marriage.

But these days, worldwide, there are more singles, and singles-again, than ever. And what if singleness, that is the joy of singleness, is meant for you? Jesus, after all, elevated singleness to a perfectly respectable way to journey through your days.

In various ways, Jesus made this point, that while we're made for beautiful things like sex and family and all the giving and receiving family can entail, we can also have our deeper needs met – sex notwithstanding – through non-marital relationships that can be just as beautiful and worthwhile.

Which is another way of saying that if you want to marry just for the sex, or if you think the grass is always greener on the married side of the fence, you'll be disappointed. Marriage entails much more.

In fact, looking at the rate of broken marriages – which is the same within the church as outside – you can make the case that singles stand a better chance of developing nurturing and lasting relationships than plenty of married people.

It's true. Family can be our greatest joy or our greatest pain.

"Who is my mother and my brothers and my sisters?" Jesus asked the crowds one day when his own family showed up to rope him in. Matthew shares the story. Jesus' family believed that he was that unstable and deluded and hopelessly embarrassing, so it wanted to get him home for everyone's good.

Instead, Jesus set them straight by pointing out that one's real family, blood or not, are those people who care enough to know us, who don't try to put us into their little boxes of preconceived notions, boxes which Jesus, we see, loved to burst out of.

He said, at its best, this is what the Church is: our surrogate family. Not a building or institution or creation of any heavy yokes, but a body of relationships, of spiritual blood and connective tissue, one that gives support and joy.

If your experience is anything like mine, you'll find enough of both out there. And you'll want to leave one for the other.