

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY **DR HUGH BRADY**, President, University College Dublin on 16 June 2006, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, on **MICHAEL KELLY, SJ**

A Sheansailéir, a mhuintir na hOllscoile agus a dhaoine uaisle,

Michael Kelly was born in Tullamore in 1929, one of seven children, three of whom became Jesuit priests. I am proud to make early reference to his outstanding academic record at UCD where he was awarded a BA in Maths and Mathematical Physics in 1951 and an MA in 1952 – both with First Class Honours. He went on to receive a licentiate in Philosophy (*maxima cum laude*) in 1955 and was ordained priest in 1961.

After ordination, Michael Kelly lived and worked in Zambia for more than 50 years, becoming a Zambian citizen. He worked for many years as headmaster of Canisius College and completed his PhD studies in the area of child and educational psychology in 1974. He subsequently became a senior lecturer and Dean of the School of Education in the University of Zambia (UNZA), in 1975. He later served as pro-vice-chancellor and deputy vice-chancellor of the university. In 1987, he became Professor of Education.

What changed Michael Kelly's life in an irreversible fashion was the emergent, devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on those with whom he worked. For close to two decades, he has spent considerable time researching the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa and in particular its impact on education. He has been to the forefront of research on the interconnection between education and HIV/AIDS. His research in Zambia and in other parts of Africa and the Caribbean has highlighted the critical role that education can play in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. He has paid particular attention to the challenges that are presented by the growing number of AIDS orphans. Into these areas he brought his training and expertise in child psychology, educational planning, education and development, and education policy formulation and analysis.

His powerful motto is: "HIV/AIDS is a weapon against education, but education is a weapon against HIV/AIDS".

His research findings - widely distributed through proceedings, articles and books - demonstrate that the more education is available, the less HIV is present. He has focused particular attention on young girls and their opportunities for schooling, having done specific research for UNICEF on this topic. And he writes and speaks passionately about the increasing "feminization of HIV/AIDS," the fact that women increasingly suffer from the

spread of the pandemic, both as being infected and as being the primary care-givers of those infected.

He has strenuously urged that universities not isolate themselves from addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS if they expect to continue functioning and serving society in the many parts of the world in which the disease is rampant. He has spoken eloquently of the need for cross-disciplinary research to address the broad range of ethical and social as well as clinical implications of the disease.

Throughout this period, he has worked closely with Irish Aid, the Irish government's official aid programme, in the development of its policy on HIV/AIDS. He was instrumental in the development of a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS by the Ministry of Education in Zambia. He also has worked extensively with international organisations such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, the UK Govt Dept for International Development, OXFAM and literally every AIDS-related organization in Africa.

He is a member of the Mobile Task Team on the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education based in the Health, Economics and HIV Division of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This team is a uniquely Africa-to-Africa technical support program. It is designed to help empower African ministries of education and their development partners to develop sector-wide HIV/AIDS policy and prioritized implementation plans to systemically manage and mitigate impact. In this capacity, he has worked with education ministries in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia and stimulated developments in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

In March of this year, at a reception hosted by Minister of State Conor Lenihan to launch the HIV and AIDS Technical Advisory Group, chaired by our UCD colleague, Prof. Billy Hall, the Minister formally recognised the contribution of Fr Michael Kelly in the area of HIV and AIDS.

Minister Lenihan announced at that ceremony:

- The establishment of the Fr Michael Kelly Lecture on HIV and AIDS to coincide with World AIDS Day
- The awarding of the Fr Michael Kelly Bursary to facilitate students from Zambia to undertake post-graduate studies in the area of HIV and AIDS and Education. The scholarship will include provision for the dissemination of the research findings in Zambia and beyond including at the Annual International Conference on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa (ICASA). The scholarship will be offered annually for three years.

Michael Kelly is part of a venerable Jesuit missionary tradition. He follows directly in the footsteps of Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci and

Roberto de Nobili as one who ministered to the less fortunate in foreign lands and increased our understanding of ourselves and our global neighbour in so doing. It is our privilege today to honour an outstanding UCD graduate and a truly prophetic man:

*PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:*

*Praesento vobis hunc meum filium, quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Utroque Jure, tam Civili quam Canonico, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.*