

AD CLERUM - FEBRUARY 2010

Dear People of God

On the Monday morning of 2nd October 2006, Charles Roberts IV took his children to school as usual, and then returned home, wrote suicide notes to his wife and each of his 3 children, loaded his bakkie with guns and drove to a nearby school where he evicted the boys from the classroom and took 10 young girls hostage. Less than an hour later five of the girls were dead, the other 5 critically injured, and he had killed himself. Just another day of living the American dream in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, USA.

What made the incident radically different from the all too common Columbine-type shootings at schools is that the school in question was a one-room, 19th-century Amish schoolhouse in the heart of a close-knit Amish community in which there was neither television nor radios, no cell phones nor motor cars; a community living apart from the American mainstream culture and holding fast to a Christian lifestyle that had remained largely unchanged for hundreds of years. In that classroom it is unlikely that any of the children had ever seen a gun before for violence in their community was limited to the occasional fist-fight amongst the children.

But the biggest surprise was not the intrusion of evil into that community, but the Amish response to it. The biggest surprise was Amish grace; a grace born out of their ongoing communal obedience to Jesus Christ – “We love because he first loved us.”

Within minutes of the shooting the Amish community began to down tools and gather together – each one in their close-knit community enfolding the others in love and ‘mutual aid;’ sharing and bearing each other’s burdens. The grieving, the funerals, the hospital visiting were all communal affairs – an injury to one was an injury to all, and all wept and grieved as one.

In many respects what I have described is perhaps not all that different from the kind of community care we see in our townships in time of crisis or bereavement. The difference lies in the extent of the response (every member of the community was actively involved) and in the fact that their involvement was an expression of their faith.

But what was dramatically different was the way the Amish community reached out to the killer’s family. Within hours of the shooting, members of the Amish community began visiting his wife and children and parents, often bearing gifts, to express their condolences for the tragedy that had befallen them too. While the community in which the killer and his family lived largely shunned the family, shocked and stunned by what had happened, it was the Amish community that gathered them into their arm and provided love, support and meals. More than half of those who attended Charles Robert’s funeral were Amish, and included some of the parents of the children who had been killed. When bereavement counselling was provided for the Amish community, they included the Robert’s family in the process and when thousands of dollars poured into the Amish community from all across America for the families of the victims, the Robert’s family were included in the distribution, for they too were victims.

Such incredible acts of forgiveness are rare, but not unknown. We saw it some years ago in the love and generosity of parents of the murdered Amy Biel and have seen it more recently in the Mxenge family extending their forgiveness to Eugene de Kok and supporting his plea for amnesty. But I chose the story of the Amish community because of a passing comment in one of the many books that have been written about it.

The comment, in the second paragraph of the book, 'Amish Grace,' simply says that while the Amish could never have imagined such a horrendous event they were '... uncommonly prepared to respond to it with graciousness, forbearance and love.' It was those words "uncommonly prepared" that struck me so forcibly.

The immediacy with which the Amish showed their forgiveness and the breadth of that forgiveness, involving as it did a whole community, amazed America. It gave rise to hundreds of radio and television programmes and even more newspaper articles and books that debated whether it was really possible to forgive someone so quickly, whether it was emotionally healthy for someone in grief to do so, and whether or not it was some religious demand imposed upon them. But what was missed in most of the discussions was that the practice of forgiveness lies at the very heart of the Amish life of discipleship and their communal life together.

What happened in the aftermath of that dreadful shooting was not for them something out of the ordinary, but something that they had been doing every day of their lives in obedience to Christ. As one Amish minister said, "The Lord's Prayer plays a big part in our forgiveness. If we can't forgive, then we won't be forgiven ... forgiving and being forgiven are inseparable." Because, for them, forgiveness is at the heart of their faith and was worked at every day as part of the discipleship of their faith community, they were able to forgive Charles Roberts. As one Amish grandmother at the time of the shooting said incredulously, "You mean some people actually thought we got together to plan forgiveness?"

The Amish community was "uncommonly prepared" - "prepared" because they had lived intentional lives of discipleship within a faith community; "uncommonly prepared" because few Christians are willing to commit to radical discipleship within a community of faith that holds them accountable to their faith and to each other. The Amish community has largely disengaged itself from mainstream America in order to follow Jesus in lives of simple obedience and humility. That faith was clearly visible in the aftermath of the shooting, prompting many to ask what power would have been unleashed in the world had the USA had the grace to respond to 9/11 in the same way.

For self reflection:

1. To what extent is my Christian life one of radical discipleship? Do I daily endeavour to model my life and all that I do and say on Jesus? What changes do I need to make to walk more closely and more faithfully with Jesus?
2. Is forgiveness a habit in my own life? Who have I not truly forgiven and instead still harbour grudges, resentment and bitterness? How can I deal with this hurt?

For group discussion:

1. How can we as diocese and parish build community that is central to our lives and helps shape our practice of Christian discipleship?
2. How do promote forgiveness as a core value in our parishes and how do we help each other to the place where forgiveness is possible?

May we love as God first loved us, and forgive as we have been forgiven

↳ Brian

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Restructuring of the Diocesan Office

As I have previously announced, the Diocesan office has undergone a restructure. With immediate effect please contact the head of each of the new departments with any queries related to their area:-

- Claire Holden for all queries relating directly to the Bishop's Office including licenses
Claire.holden@anglicanjoburg.org.za
W: 011 486 1014
F: 011 486 1015
- John de Reuck for all financial queries
john.dereuck@anglicanjoburg.org.za
W: 011 336 8724
F: 011 333 3053
- Rodney Taylor for all administrative queries including pension, medical aid and insurance
rodney.taylor@anglicanjoburg.org.za
W: 011 336 8724
F: 011 333 3053

Please be aware that we are still in the process of recruiting people to fill 3 of our vacant positions and as a result are significantly short-staffed at present.

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The new **Diocesan website** is up and running and gaining momentum! Please visit it at www.anglicanjoburg.org.za. Each parish and Diocesan organisation has its own portal and we are asking you to take responsibility for maintaining and updating it. Full training will be provided. Please contact Martin Louw at martin.louw@anglicanjoburg.org.za to arrange training and to learn how to make your section work to your best advantage. Please do act on this request as incomplete portals reflect negatively on the diocese and our website.

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Vestry 2010

In terms of the Canons Vestry is required to be completed by the 15th of March and the necessary returns and financials to be submitted to the Diocesan office within 7 days of the election. Because of the date of Synod it is vital that we have all the information on time and I am therefore reminding you and urging you to ensure that there are no unnecessary delays. Please contact the relevant Diocesan department if there are any problems.

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Transformers

The first meeting of the Transformers will take place at St Joseph's on Saturday the 13th of February. All parishes should by now have submitted names of candidates and I will be writing to those parishes who do not have candidates to ask for an explanation.

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SAINT THOMAS' INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP IN MINISTRY

The STILIM board is running a course for Lay Leaders during 2010. Anyone who is a Parish Councillor, Churchwarden or a leader in any area of ministry is invited to attend. The Course covers some vital areas of ministry such as:

- Theories of organization.
- Creating and implementing a vision.
- Team building and management.
- Leadership styles and their consequences.
- Leading and managing change.

The course starts on the 6th of February and will take place at the Parish of St Thomas, Linden from 09h00 to 12h30 on the first Saturday of every month with the exception of May and August when it will take place on the second Saturday. Please contact Mrs Di Buchanan on 011 782 9201 for more information or to apply. Applications close on 6th February.

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Spiritual Formation

Clergy Day: As advertised in the Weekly Newsletter, the Liturgy workshop will begin at 16h30 on Tuesday 2nd February and continue with 2 full day sessions on Wednesday 3rd and Thursday the 4th. Please remember that attendance is of obligation.

The abridged liturgical workshop for all self-supporting clergy, parish ministers and liturgical leaders, and choir leaders on Saturday 6th of February will begin at 08h30 at Ipelegeng Community Centre. Please ensure that the names of all those attending have been given to Claire for catering purposes.

Preparing for Holy Week: Bishop Peter Lee will be hosting a clergy retreat at St Benedict's from the 22nd – 25th February 2010 to enable you to take time out to prepare for Holy Week. This will be a very worthwhile experience and I would encourage you to make the effort to attend.

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Reading Recommendations

As we will all be attending the Clergy workshop on liturgy it seems appropriate to recommend readings around the theme of liturgy. Canon John Suggit has written a superb little book on the Eucharist entitled "Anglican Liturgical Notes for Today" (available at a very

reasonable price from Cynthia Botha at Provincial Publishing). As with everything written by John it is superb. It is a book that all of us should buy and read.

Another superb book on the Eucharist is Timothy Radcliffe's book, "Why go to Church?" in which he shows why the Eucharist is central to the life of faith.

The two books are very different in their approach and the way they deal with the subject, but each illuminates and enriches the other. I commend them both to you unreservedly.

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Provincial News

- **TEE** College, Johannesburg is seeking an Academic Course Writer for an initial contract until December 2010. Please see the attached advertisement for more information.
- **Synod of Bishops** will take place in Swaziland from the 8th – 12th of this month. Please pray for all the bishops of the Province as we attend this event.

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Diocesan Family News

- **Basil Matthews** will be instituted as Rector of the Parish of Christ the King on Sunday 14th February at 15h00. As Basil and Ivy are new to the Diocese I hope that a significant number of you will be there to welcome them.
- Our congratulations to Maria Fram-Arp and Charles van Rooyen who have been ordained as Deacon and to Kevin Balkwill, Dorcus Baleni, Shona Fleming, Parker Monala, Alice Mugglestone, Denzall Snell, Chris Uitzinger and Susan van Niekerk who have been ordained as Priest.
- I would like to congratulate **Kenny Xinwa and Andrew Phillips** on completing their Bachelor of Theology degree at TEE College. They will be graduating on the 17th April 2010. Andrew has asked that I extend his thanks to the Parish of St John the Divine and all clergy, family and friends who have supported and prayed for him during his time of study.
- Congratulations too to **Charles van Rooyen** on completing his Diploma from the College of the Transfiguration.
- Until Victor Tshoagong is able to resume duties, **Dan Ngqumeya** will be the relieving priest at the Parish of St Thomas, Kagiso.
- **Freddy Masole**, a former priest of this Diocese, died last week. His funeral was at St Augustine, this past Friday. We extend to his family our deepest condolences.

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Moves and Appointments

- **Archie Motaung** has been appointed as Interim Pastor of the Parish of St Michael and St George, Bez Valley. He has been warmly received and we hope that he will be very happy there.
- **Liz Klingsberg** has been appointed as Assistant Priest at the Church of the Ascension in Rangeview. She will begin her ministry there with immediate effect.
- **Dorcus Baleni** has been appointed as Assistant Priest in Parish of St Mary, Dobsonville.
- **Chris Uitsinger** has been appointed as Assistant Priest at the Parish of the Church of the Resurrection, Meadowlands.
- **Charles van Rooyen** has been appointed as Deacon at the Parish of St Michael, Bryanston.
- **Maria Fram-Arp** has been appointed as Deacon at the Parish of St Francis, Parkview.

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Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries

Please remember the following persons in your prayers as they celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this month:

| FEBRUARY | | MARCH | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 st | Wilfred Pohl | 1 st | Roy Collins |
| 1 st | Thato & Fecilia Molipa (W/A) | 1 st | Mathabo Dlwati |
| 2 nd | Mapula Mphaki | 1 st | David Butcher |
| 2 nd | Abram & Pearl Mokgohlane (W/A) | 3 rd | Peter Roberts |
| 4 th | Ivan & Pat Lane (W/A) | 4 th | Primrose Seku |
| 5 th | +Brian's Consecration | 5 th | Pearl Sharp |
| 6 th | Margaret Place | 5 th | Chris Aitken |
| 7 th | Bridgette Oliphant | 6 th | Chris & Maureen Rowland-Aitken |
| 9 th | Wouter & Karen Uitzinger (W/A) | 8 th | Errol Dengler |
| 9 th | Adrian van Niekerk | 10 th | Peter Witbooi |
| 10 th | Jerry Bailey | 15 th | Roseline Beart |
| 10 th | Gail Dengler | 16 th | Eugenia Zeka |
| 10 th | Andrew Payne | 16 th | Kim Jacobs |
| 11 th | Margaret Beckley | 16 th | Gill Lee |
| 12 th | Susan van Niekerk | 17 th | Ethel Mbalula |
| 13 th | Ranthite & Moipone Namu (W/A) | 17 th | Charles Germond |
| 14 th | Ray & Lynette Bewsher (W/A) | 20 th | Steve Moreo |
| 14 th | Margaret & Sidney Place (W/A) | 20 th | Geoff Paxton |
| 14 th | Kevin Balkwill | 21 st | Beatrice Mpupu |
| 15 th | Edna Cooke | 22 nd | Helen Smith |
| 17 th | Paul Singleton | 22 nd | Kgoro Mogami |
| 18 th | Dorcas Baleni | 23 rd | Meshack Nhlapo |
| 18 th | Lorraine Williamson | 25 th | Sedupe Ramokgopa |
| 19 th | Margaret Eades | 27 th | Beverley Longbottom |
| 19 th | Gail Westwood | 29 th | Jeanette Ross |
| 19 th | Wendy Henwood | 29 th | John Whyte |
| 20 th | Corrie Mekgwe | 29 th | Motlalepula Namu |
| 21 st | Geraldine Singleton | 30 th | Douglas Torr |
| 21 st | Michael Oliphant | 31 st | Paul & Ntombi Molefe (W/A) |
| 22 nd | Lynette Ellis | 31 st | Rosemary Gray |
| 22 nd | Nokwezi Dodo | | |
| 22 nd | Modisaotsile Monala | | |
| 23 rd | Lefetho Lethoko | | |

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| 23 th | Thelma Walmsley | | |
| 25 th | Michael & Bridgette Oliphant (W/A) | | |
| 27 th | Nompulelo Mcilongo | | |
| 27 th | Errol & Gail Dengler (W/A) | | |
| 29 th | Mashikane & Buyile Montjane (W/A) | | |

Although we endeavour to keep our records up-to-date, experience tells us that we often miss out on special dates. If you are celebrating a special occasion in the coming month that is not on the list please email Claire so that we can update our lists.

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Dates for Diary

| FEBRUARY | | Diocesan | Bishop |
|-----------------|----|--|---|
| Tuesday | 2 | PM Opening of Clergy Liturgy Workshop | PM Opening of Clergy Liturgy Workshop |
| Wednesday | 3 | Clergy Liturgy Workshop | Clergy Liturgy Workshop |
| Thursday | 4 | Clergy Liturgy Workshop | Clergy Liturgy Workshop |
| Saturday | 6 | Liturgy Workshop: Self Supporting Clergy, Choir Leaders, Parish Ministers & Liturgy Portfolio Leaders | FOX / Liturgy Workshop: Self Supporting Clergy, Choir Leaders, Parish Ministers & Liturgy Portfolio Leaders |
| Sunday | 7 | | Pastoral visit: Resurrection, Meadowlands |
| Monday | 8 | | Synod of Bishops |
| Tuesday | 9 | Archdeaconry Region 1 Clergy Meeting | Synod of Bishops |
| Wednesday | 10 | | Synod of Bishops |
| Thursday | 11 | | Synod of Bishops |
| Friday | 12 | AWF AGM | Synod of Bishops |
| Saturday | 13 | Archdeaconry Region 4 Meeting / Diaconal Training / Transformers | Deaconal training: The Diocesan Ministry |
| Sunday | 14 | Back to Church Sunday | Pastoral visit: St Saviours, Khutsong / Rector's Institution: Coronationville |
| Monday | 15 | Archdeaconry Region 2 Clergy Meeting | Provincial Media Meeting |
| Tuesday | 16 | SHROVE TUESDAY | Provincial Publishing Meeting |
| Wednesday | 17 | ASH WEDNESDAY | |
| Thursday | 18 | | St Benedict Spiritual Formation Portfolio |
| Saturday | 20 | Final date for Notice of Vestry/lists for nomination of Churchwarden & Council / Archdeaconry Region 1 Council Meeting / Ordinand Training | Ordinand meeting: Anglican Ordained Ministry |
| Sunday | 21 | Back to Church Sunday | Pastoral visit: St Augustine, Orange Grove |
| Wednesday | 24 | Training Rectors Meeting / DFB | Training Rectors Meeting |
| Thursday | 25 | Independent Schools Half Term Begins / Bishop Bavin Confirmation | 10am Bishop Bavin Confirmation |
| Saturday | 27 | POST / Saints Lay Training | |

| MARCH | | Diocesan | Bishop |
|--------------|----|--|---|
| Tuesday | 2 | Independent Schools Half Term Ends | Peter Block Conference |
| Wednesday | 3 | Exec, Turstees and DFB meeting | Peter Block Conference / Exec, Trustees & DFB |
| Thursday | 4 | Clergy Day | Clergy Day |
| Saturday | 6 | FOX / Anglicare | |
| Sunday | 7 | | Pastoral visit: St John, Orlando |
| Saturday | 13 | AWF General Meeting / Diaconal Training / Transformers | Transformers |
| Sunday | 14 | Final Date for Vestry | Pastoral visit: St Mary, Orlando |

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| Wednesday | 17 | Archdeacons Meeting | Archdeacons Meeting |
| Saturday | 20 | Ordination Training | |
| Sunday | 21 | HUMAN RIGHTS DAY | Pastoral visit: St Paul, Parkhurst |
| Monday | 22 | PUBLIC HOLIDAY | |
| Tuesday | 23 | Closing date for motions to Synod / Archdeaconry Region 1 Clergy Quiet Day | |
| Wednesday | 24 | Retired Clergy Tea / Trustees | Retired Clergy Tea |
| Friday | 26 | Independent Schools Holidays Begin | |
| Saturday | 27 | POST / Saints Lay Training | |
| Sunday | 28 | PALM SUNDAY | Pastoral visit: St John, Roodepoort |
| Monday | 29 | Synod Agenda Book out | |

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General Notices

- **Reviving the spirit of Sophiatown** - The Huddleston Memorial Centre is looking for new Ambassadors to take part in a year long programme for aspiring youth leaders aged 18-24 who have motivation, dreams and passion for making a difference in their community. For more information on who is eligible and how to apply please see 'Sophiatown Ambassador Program'.
- Siyafundisa will be holding a **Valentine's Day AIDS Awareness Campaign** from 09h00 on the 14th of February at the Parish of St Matthew, Emdeni. All local Life Skills Facilitators are expected to attend. Please contact Jabilani on 082 323 9948 or jmiya@anglicanaids.net by 5th February for more information.
- The Parish of St. Catherine, Bramley will be hosting a Gospel Evening entitled "**Songs of Love**" on Friday the 19th of February at the Church. Please visit our website at www.anglicanjoburg.org.za for more details.
- **Siyafundisa** would like to extend an invitation to all clergy participating in their Life Skills Program to attend a residential workshop from 09h30 on the 04th of March - 15h00 on the 5th March 2010 at a venue yet to be announced. The purpose of this workshop is to connect all Heads of Sites (Clergy & NPO Managers / Directors) in a strategic planning for the "**no cost extension**" period of our programme. To secure your place it is essential that you please confirm your attendance with Ms. NICO PALMER on 011 333 4399 before Monday 15th February 2010.

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