

AD CLERUM - JUNE 2010

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ

The film "Doubt," adapted from the Pulitzer prize-winning play of the same name is a story of conflict that erupts in a Roman Catholic school in 1964 – two years after the profound changes brought about by Vatican II and at the height of the struggle for racial desegregation in American schools. The conflict revolves around two characters who are polar opposites of the other. On the one side is Sister Aloysius the long standing head of the school, who rules with an iron fist and who both deserves and is proud of her reputation as a strict disciplinarian. On the other is Father Flynn, the newly appointed parish priest who is warm, genial and laid back and determined to bring much needed change into the school.

The profound differences in their approach to life and ministry erupts into open conflict when Sister Aloysius, acting on a comment from one of her young nuns, St James, accuses Father Flynn of paying inappropriate attention to twelve year old Donald Miller, the first black student in the school. Father Flynn's denials and defence of himself serves only to escalate the conflict to the point where Sister Aloysius confronts Donald's mother with her concerns.

Father Flynn then goes to Sister Aloysius to demand that she stop her campaign against him, saying that her accusations are based on nothing more than wild imagination and unfounded suspicions and that he has done nothing more than try to help a child who is beaten by his father and who is struggling to cope as the only black student in an all white school. She tells him that she has checked on his past and knows the real reason why he was moved from his previous parish and that she will not stop what she is doing until he resigns. Which he does, and is, as Sister Aloysius tells the nuns, promptly "rewarded" by the male dominated clerical hierarchy by being "promoted" to a larger parish and school while she is rebuked for having discussed the matter with the nuns and the mother of the child rather than with another parish priest.

The closing scene of the film shows Sister Aloysius admitting to the junior nun, St James, who had become an unwitting accomplice in what had happened, that she had lied about checking into his past; a lie she nevertheless defends, saying that in the pursuit of righting a wrong, there is a price, and that lie was the price they needed to pay to protect the boys of the parish. For Sister Aloysius, his resignation justifies the lie because it proves its truth. Nevertheless, the young nun is so devastated by the lie and the ugliness of the course of events that tells Sister Aloysius that she can no longer sleep at night. As she walks away, Sister Aloysius begins to cry, but whether her tears are for St James, for the lie, or for the whole sordid event we never know.

The film is about living with uncertainty; the uncertainty and doubt of living in times of rapid and significant social change; in "... a time between no longer and not yet" (Joan Borsynko), of wrestling with questions that do not allow for easy answers, and of struggling with our certitudes in times of ambiguity and compromise. It is a film that raises many questions, but the brilliance of the film lies in the fact that the audience is drawn into the events in such a

way that, even though the film never actually makes clear whether there is any abuse or not, the audience leaves either convinced that the priest is guilty or that he has been the victim of a sick woman's delusions. And audiences are almost equally divided as to the answer. Though the film leaves everything in doubt, it creates certitude in the mind of the viewer.

The ability to create certitude in a context of doubt raises serious questions for us. That Sister Aloysius has no doubt – even to the point of being able to lie in defence of her certainties – is itself disturbing, but that we who are simply spectators can arrive at similar levels of certitude that may well be in conflict with the certitudes of others in the audience is even more disturbing. We have all watched the same set of events unfold, have listened to the same conversations, and yet have arrived at radically different conclusions. When Susan and I watched the film we came to the opposite conclusion, and both of us were certain that we were right and the other wrong. And that raises questions:- How objective are we? To what extent do we simply see what we want to see or expect to see and how often do we then interpret things in ways that feed into already deeply entrenched beliefs or stereotypes? How much is our interpretation of a situation coloured by our likes or dislikes of particular kinds of people or groups of people?

These questions all deserve serious reflection for they raise profound questions about the integrity and effectiveness of our ministry. It asks me who I am closed to, and why I close them out? It poses questions about jumping to conclusions and reacting to people on the basis of gender, colour and stereotypes. It challenges me to look at how often I might misread situations and respond inappropriately and even hurtfully. In a world where more often than not doubt prevails, it questions all my certitudes.

But for me, the most brilliant and chilling aspect of the film lay in the way it drew me away from the real issue and locked me into certitudes about irrelevancies. You see, at its heart the film is not about absolutes in respect of sexual abuse; it's about a young black boy and his needs. One of the most compelling characters in the film has only a cameo appearance. It is the mother of the child who is dismayed by Sister Aloysius's visit; dismayed not because of what she says, but because of the implications if any of this should come out.

Her husband, she tells Sister Aloysius, has long had suspicions about his son's sexuality and has picked on him and beaten him mercilessly. If those suspicions were proven true, her son would never be safe from his father. But also, if true, he would be asked to leave the school which was his one hope for a good education and a life outside of the ghetto. If true he would never see Father Flynn again, a man whom he admired and who is the only male role model he has ever had given his non-relationship with his father. She wants nothing to do with Sister Aloysius' determination to destroy Father Flynn because she knows that in destroying him, her son will be destroyed. And that, for her, is all that matters.

I was so caught up in the conflict situation in the film that I missed the pastoral crisis of the boy and his mother. And so, in addition to all the other questions the film raises, it left me asking myself, "How often do I get so involved in the details of what I am doing that I totally miss deeper issues and the pastoral needs and opportunities it presents?" It also left me wondering whether the conflict that is tearing our Anglican communion apart is not a case of both sides getting so enmeshed in taking the moral high ground in the conflict that they are both missing central pastoral issues.

For self reflection:

1. To what extent do underlying assumptions, stereotypes, and prejudices about certain kinds of people colour the way I respond to them? How do you perceive ... Rich people? Poor people? Beggars? Youth? Old people? Unsophisticated people?

People of different racial groups? Or languages? Or gender? Or sexual orientation? Pray about your answers and seek God's healing.

For group discussion:

1. Is our parish truly open and welcoming of all people without showing prejudice or special favour? The rich? Poor? Beggars? Youth? Old? Unsophisticated? People of different racial groups? Or languages? Or gender? Or sexual orientation? How could we be more welcoming?
2. Do people coming to us in respect of baptism, confirmation, marriage, or funerals leave knowing that their pastoral needs have been heard and addressed? What changes do we need to make in our policies in order to be more sensitive to the real needs of our people?

May our hearts be broken by the things that break the heart of God.



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Synod

Most of the comments I have heard about Synod have been positive, and from what I saw there was a good spirit of camaraderie and most people seemed to enter into the conference debates with enthusiasm. The number of additional visitors from parishes (over and above the elected delegates) both at the opening service and the first sitting of synod itself are, I think, an indication that synods are more fun than tedious. Thank you, one and all, for making our first sitting of synod a success.

However, we did experience some logistical problems which we are working at solving:-

- The parking arranged for the service at the Cathedral seemed to work well and the security firm ensured that no one experienced problems. Problems were experienced at Darragh House, but only because people (mainly clergy) ignored the request not to park there. Our failure to honour this request caused major problems for the Cathedral in respect of tenant parking and this resulted in a number of irate tenants and with cars being parked in. Sadly these problems mean that at future Synods no one will be admitted into Darragh House.
- We had a few catering problems: the lack of tea was a miscommunication problem and we apologise for it; the delay at lunch time was the fault of outside caterers and again, although it had nothing to do with us, we can only apologise for the delay. The tea and food distribution points were also slower than we would have liked and we will make alternative plans for the next sitting of synod.
- A few of you expressed concern that we did not make as much progress as some would have liked. In retrospect, we probably could have moved more quickly through the 1st Reading of the Measures before us. However, our inability to finalise any of the other motions was due to the fact that a number of conference groups suggested amendments to the motions, but presented them not in the form of amendments but rather as group reports. Had they been formulated as

amendments they could have been debated, but in the form that we received them, each of them first needed work done on them before they could be presented as amendments. The decision to hold them over to the next sitting of synod was simply to avoid the frustration of people having to wait while amendments were rewritten into a workable format. At the next sitting of synod, we will ensure that there are clear guidelines in place for the drafting of any further amendments.

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Spiritual Formation

Clergy Day: The next Clergy Day will take place on the **1st of June** at St. Joseph's. We will look at Nurturing Vocations and discuss the ordination process and FOX.

There will be a Clergy Day on the **6th of July**. Dr Mandla Adonis will be the guest speaker and will be looking at Systems and Processes for effective Management. The meeting will take place at St. Martins-in-the-Veld as this is the venue closest to GIBS where Dr Adonis is based.

Centre for Christian Spirituality: The purpose of CCS is to nurture and encourage ministry and formation in Christian spirituality and mysticism. Please find details of their June program attached.

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Reading Recommendations

Eugene Peterson's final work in his 5 volume series on spiritual theology has been released. Entitled "**Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing up in Christ,**" it is a reflection on growing into spiritual maturity based on the Letter to the Ephesians. As with all his books in the series, it has some important and valuable things to say.

Canterbury Press is publishing a new series entitled "Canterbury Studies in Anglicanism" with the objective of answering the question, "What is the real identity of Anglicanism?" The first book in the series, "**Christ and Culture**" written by leaders from around the Anglican communion, is a reflection on the key themes of Lambeth 2008. Although largely directed at bishops, it addresses key issues in ways that reflect the breadth and complexity of contemporary Anglicanism.

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World Cup News

- Archbishop Thabo has written the following **World Cup Prayer** that we would encourage you to use in your parishes:

“God bless the 2010 World Cup:
Bless those who compete, and those who watch,
Bless those who host, and those who visit,
And help all who love the 'the beautiful game'
Grow in the love you have given us to share. Amen”

- **‘Growing the Church’** has suggested some simple and easy to implement ideas that churches could implement during the World Cup that would help make your church a venue where World Cup visitors will feel welcome. Some ideas are set out below:
 - Placing a “Jabulani” soccer ball and/or flags of the participating countries at a prominent place in the church. One could even include the words of the national anthems of the participating countries and the names of their squads.
 - Pray for the players, management and support staff, the local organising committee and the families of those who are far from home while the tournament is underway.
 - Pray for safety and a spirit of healthy competition and enjoyment throughout the tournament.
 - Hang banners outside or in the church to welcome those who are in South Africa for the World Cup.

- **Child Trafficking:** While the World Cup is primarily a fun event, it does come with a significantly increased threat of child trafficking. During the last World Cup in Germany 300 children and young adults were abducted. Child traffickers are experienced, well organised, check the lay of the land, move carefully and strike when you don't expect it. It takes 15 seconds for a child to disappear so we all need to be vigilant especially in busy places like taxi ranks, stadiums and shopping centres. We strongly encourage all parents, schools and churches to warn children and young adults not to speak to or accept gifts from strangers, nor to walk alone especially at night. If somebody approaches them, they must be told to simply walk away, and report it to the nearest person they know and trust.

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Provincial News

- Please find attached a Press Statement about the **Mother’s Union**, its role and objectives.

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Diocesan Family News

- A copy of the **Bishop’s Charge** can be found on the home page of our website. Visit www.anglicanjoburg.org.za to read the full text.

- We wish **Gerard and Pearl Sharp** all the very best as they begin their retirement this month. I would again like to thank them for all that they have been in the lift of the Diocese over the years and remind all parishes who have not yet made a donation towards their retirement gift to please contact the Diocesan office.
- Please pray for **Tim and Kirstie Long** as they mourn the death of Kirstie's mother Kathleen Durward, who was an active member at St Martins for a very long period, and who died on Saturday. Her funeral will be held from St Michael & All Angels, Weltevreden Park on Wednesday the 2nd of June at 14h00.
- I would like to thank Phumza Ntuli in the Diocesan Office for our new look **Prayer Diary** which you will find attached. In future the Prayer Diary will be distributed each month with the Ad Clerum.
- Work on the roof of **St. Joseph's** is scheduled to start on the 7th of June. As those of you who attended Synod will know, we are hoping to have the Diocesan office at St. Joseph's by the 1st of October this year.
- Congratulations to **Lynda Shimmin** who joins the Diocese in full-time, stipendiary ministry this month. We wish Lynda all the best in this new chapter of her life and ministry.

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Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries

JUNE BIRTHDAYS: May God continue to bless your life and give you the desires of your heart!

1 st	Thato Molipa	9 th	Diana Gay
3 rd	Ian Macintosh	11 th	Maud Khumalo
3 rd	Diana Thorburn	11 th	Lee-Ann Minakium
4 th	Mabatho Rakale	15 th	Maria Mhlongo
5 th	Basil Matthews	16 th	Val Lodge
7 th	Ivy Matthews	18 th	Jack Williamson
7 th	Gabriel Tholo	22 nd	Abe Mokgohlane
8 th	Diana Keartland	22 nd	Evelyn Abrahams
9 th	Fred Robb	23 rd	Neo Motlabane

JUNE ANNIVERSARY: "There is no feeling more comforting and consoling than knowing you are right next to the one you love." *Anonymous*

1 st	Sam & Nthabiseng Moswatlhe (19yrs)	23 rd	Neo & Beatrice Motlabane (8yrs)
1 st	John & Susan Alexander (51yrs)	23 rd	Basil & Ivy Matthews(20yrs)
4 th	Andrew & Yvonne Payne (50yrs)	26 rd	Tim & Jos Mncube(26yrs)
7 th	Jerry & Beryl Bailey (42yrs)		

JULY BIRTHDAYS: Wishing you a blessed Birthday!

1 st	Tebogo May	18 th	Agnes Witbooi
3 rd	Yvonne Meyers	18 th	Rodney Taylor
4 th	Morgan Ellis	21 st	Xolani Dlwati
4 th	Lyn Bewsher	22 nd	Eric Richardson
4 th	Rachel Mapheng	24 th	Precious Chaane
5 th	Trevor Slade	25 th	Mamosebetsi Maloka
6 th	Eunice Marubelela	25 th	Helen Els
6 th	Barbara Siaki	26 th	Roseline Francis
7 th	Lucas Mekgwe	26 th	Paul Germond
7 th	John Westwood	28 th	Bernice Stevens

9 th	Wendy Mollink	28 th	David Eades
9 th	Ivan Lane	30 th	McGlory Speckman
10 th	John Ntsoko	31 st	Ranthite Namo
11 th	Linda Mokgathe	31 st	Nomhle Moselane
12 th	Gerry Schaafsma	31 st	Dale White
13 th	Joe Maboe	31 st	Vanessa Michael
13 th	Alf Khumalo	31 st	Erna Basson
13 th	Kirstie Long	31 st	Sarah Andrews
14 th	Liz Klingenberg	31 st	Ranthite Namo

JULY ANNIVERSARIES: “Our wedding was many years ago. The celebration continues to this day” Gene Perret

1 st	Barrie & Val Lodge(44yrs)	12 th	Wilhelm & Liz Klingenberg (41yrs)
3 rd	+Brian & Susan (39yrs)	21 st	Gerard & Pearl Sharp (26yrs)

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 Phumza at phumza.ntuli@anglicanjoburg.org.za so that we can update our lists.

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Dates for Diary

JUNE		Diocesan	Bishop
Tuesday	1	Clergy Day	LEAVE
Wednesday	2		LEAVE
Thursday	3		LEAVE
Saturday	5	FOX	
Sunday	6	St John's College Confirmation	Pastoral visit: Christ Church, Mayfair / St John's College Confirmation
Wednesday	9	Independent / Government Schools Close	
Thursday	10	Vision Renewal Workshop	
Friday	11	Football World Cup starts / Vision Renewal Workshop / AWF Exec Retreat	
Saturday	12	Diaconal Training / Transformers	
Sunday	13		Pastoral visit: St John, Benmore
Tuesday	15	Archdeaconry Region 5 Clergy Meeting	
Wednesday	16	YOUTH DAY	
Saturday	19	Ordinands Training	
Sunday	20		Pastoral visit: St Francis, Parkview
Wednesday	23	Trustees	
Saturday	26	POST	
Sunday	27		Pastoral visit: St Andrew, Randburg

JULY		Diocesan	Bishop
Sunday	4		Pastoral visit: St Stephen, Wedela
Tuesday	6	Clergy Day	Clergy Day
Thursday	8		LEAVE
Friday	9		LEAVE
Saturday	10	Anglicare	LEAVE
Sunday	11	Football World Cup Final	LEAVE
Monday	12		LEAVE

Tuesday	13	Independent / Government Schools Open / Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Wednesday	14	Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Thursday	15	Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Saturday	17	Archdeaconry Region 5 Council Meeting / Ordinand Training / Self Supporting Clergy Day	Self Supporting Clergy Day
Sunday	18		Pastoral visit: Mary Magdelene, Protea South
Saturday	24	Region 4 Archdeaconry Meeting / POST / Saints Lay Training	Retreat: Desert Mothers & Fathers
Sunday	25		Retreat: Desert Mothers & Fathers
Wednesday	28	DFB	
Saturday	31	AWF Manche Masemola Pilgrimage / STILIM Graduation	STILIM Graduation

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General Notices

- The next meeting of **Interim Pastors** will take place from 09h30 to 11h30 on Monday 31st May at St Margaret's Bedfordview. The topic is the 'Five Steps of Congregation Re-orientation'.
- Amadodana Ase Wesele will be performing at a **fundraising concert** at the Parish of St James, Diepkloof at 14h00 on the 6th of June. Tickets cost R40 and refreshments will be on sale. Please contact Angie Mabena on 083 275 8574 or Mpho Mohajane on 082 922 3405 for more information or to book your tickets.
- The Parish of St George, Parktown will be holding a **book sale** and morning tea at 10h00 on the 12th of June to raise funds for their Pastoral Care Committee. Please support them by delivering all your unwanted books to the parish office and joining them on the day to refill your bookshelves and enjoy a cup of tea and eats. For more information please contact Candy Rivett-Carnac on 011 482 7983 or on 083 460 2585.

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Directory Updates

- Please use the parish email address of office@staugustines.org.za for all correspondence for Lynda Shimmin. She is no longer available on the 'flower' address.
- Please note the new e mail address for Christ Church Mayfair is Christchurch.mayfair@anglicanjoburg.org.za