

AD CLERUM - MARCH 2011

One of the most highly regarded news magazines for political commentary in the English speaking world, "The Economist," recently carried the story of President Zuma's Eastern Cape speech in which he said, "When you vote for the ANC you are choosing to go to heaven. When you don't vote for the ANC, you should know that you are choosing that man who carries a fork - who cooks people." They also quoted his promise that if you have an ANC card you are guaranteed a place in heaven and his warning to those who did not support the ruling party that "the ancestors of this land ... will all turn their backs on you."

Beyond mentioning that the words had caused a furore amongst opposition political parties and church leaders, it made little comment other than to say that it "... smacked of the same hubris demonstrated by Mr Zuma's claim in the 2009 general elections that the ANC would continue to rule 'until Jesus comes'." What they did say, though, was that, in spite of the fact that both God and the ancestors have been co-opted as firm and unwavering supporters of the ANC, the ANC itself appears to be losing sight of the very things that made it great and to be increasingly mired down in cronyism and corruption. And, it went on to say, despite repeated promises to reform the system and clean up its act, the ANC has still to make good on any of its promises.

There is really nothing new in any of this. We've heard it all before and know it to be true. And, if truth be told, cronyism, corruption and broken promises are nothing new to political parties throughout the world. As I passed through England on my way to Canada, the newspapers were carrying a story of local politicians voting themselves excessive annual salary increases - in one town an increase 160% over a 3 year period. In Canada, which is gearing up for national elections, the papers are full of stories about political leaders who claim to be concerned for those who are struggling to make ends meet, but whose track records have been full of self-enrichment and broken promises. Both of those sets of stories mirror our own South African situation and could have appeared in our own local newspapers.

If political problems are endemic everywhere, why bother to single out our South African situation for comment? Simply this ... in its article on South Africa the Economist cites research recently done by the University of Cape Town in 19 democratic countries in Africa. The finding was that, throughout Africa, most people have a deeply deferential view of political authority and that South Africa scored more poorly than most in this regard and in regard to the accountability of its leaders. Only 10% of South Africans believe that Members of Parliament are answerable to the people who elected them and less than 30% of us believe that MPS can hold the President to account. The majority of South Africans hold the view that "people are like children; the government should take care of them like a parent" - to the extent that 40% of us said that we believe that the President should be able "to decide everything".

Those finding terrify me because, if the findings are accurate, they say that we as South Africans have little understanding of what democracy is all about. It explains why communities take to the streets in violent protest about broken promises and the perception that no one in authority takes them or their grievances seriously. We complain about crime,

about corruption in the police, in the justice system and among our politicians, and about the lack of service delivery at national, provincial and local levels, but we fail on an ongoing basis to hold anyone accountable. And as we go into our local elections we will re-elect those who have failed us miserably for the past few years and who will, doubtless, fail us again in the future despite their promises.

In his most recent book, "After You Believe," Tom Wright speaks of the 'volcanic' reaction in England to the fact that some of their politicians were padding their expense accounts with fraudulent expense claims. He writes:-

"People in other countries may look on with some amusement at the fuss, because it has to do with corrupt politicians – in many countries people *assume* that politicians are corrupt and that the citizenry can't do anything about it – but in my country it has shaken our whole system to its foundations. ... And the excuse that has been that they were all acting 'within the rules.' Well, maybe; but they made up the rules themselves! When challenged, some of our politicians declared, in effect, that they saw nothing wrong with using public money to further their own wealth."

Two things struck me as I read his comments. The first is his sense of moral outrage (and that of the people of England) that those politicians who saw nothing wrong with using public money to further their own wealth could so betray the people who had elected them. Clearly such behaviour is, for him, a completely unacceptable betrayal of trust. The second is the way he goes on to question the moral implications of what has happened. He writes:-

"But the reason for raising the issue ... is that it demonstrates another place at which the moral question of the early 21st century is raising its head. What happens 'after you believe' – in democracy? In the Western financial system? In the public life and global community of tomorrow's world? Can we live on 'rules' and 'regulations' ... rather than the development of deep, wise, and trustworthy character?"

And there, my friends, is the rub. Yes, we should be shocked at the levels of cronyism, corruption, and broken promises that presently mark our political life. Yes, we should insist that those who have been elected by us are answerable to us for the way they serve the nation. Yes, we should demand that those who do not deliver should be relieved of their office and not re-elected. Yes, that is what democracy is all about and we are a democratic nation. But

We too must live as people of character – deep, wise, and trustworthy. We must, to use the words of St Paul, live lives worthy of the calling to which we were called (Eph. 4:1). We must hold our leaders accountable, even as we hold ourselves (and each other) accountable.

"What happens," asks Tom Wright, "after you believe?" What happens after the things of this world in which you believe and in which you have trusted have failed you? Where do you turn to then? What happens after you believe in Jesus – how do you grow in grace and character? How do you 'put on the mind of Christ?' Only by making our faith central to all that we are and all that we do, will we begin living that faith to the glory of God. Only then will we be transformed. Only then will our nation be healed. And only then will God's kingdom come here on earth even as it is in heaven.

For individual reflection:

1. To what extent do I hold my daily life accountable to Christ? To the community of faith? How is this accountability expressed? In my prayer life? With spiritual mentors and support groups?

For group discussion:

1. How can we begin to hold those whom we have placed in authority over us (both in the church and society) accountable to us and to God?
2. How can we as a community of faith begin to hold ourselves accountable to each other for living the gospel and growing the kingdom?

↳ *Simon*

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Spiritual Formation

Clergy Day: The Clergy Day is taking place at the Parish of St Andrew, Kensington today. Clergy will work through the revised Lenten lectionary and the sermon outlines which speak into the focus of each of the Lenten course videos.

Lent Programme: The whole diocese will be following a common 6-week Lenten Programme entitled 'Life of Jesus'. I hope that you have already made arrangements for the projection of the video in the church or hall. Ideally this should be through an overhead projector able to show videos. Please speak to your Archdeacon if you have difficulties in this regard.

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Reading Recommendations

I have been reading Tom Wright's book, "**Surprised by Hope**" which is subtitled "Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection and the Mission of the Church". It is a study into what the New Testament has to say about death and life after death. It is challenging in that, he argues, most of our theology of death and life after death is not true to the scriptures. And that, in turn, distorts some of the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith. It is pure Tom Wright - scholarly, profound and easily readable. Buy it now.

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Churchwardens Meeting with Bishop

As advertised in the Yellow Pages, the Bishop will be meeting with all Churchwardens from 08h30 to 12h00 at the Parish of Holy Cross on Saturday the 12th of March.

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Provincial News

- The Archbishop has received a number of letters from Bishops and Clergy in **Zimbabwe** telling of the persecution that Anglicans are experiencing in that country. Please join him in praying earnestly for strength for all those who continue to love and serve the Lord in the face of adversity.

- The Archbishop has issued a statement about the situation in **Libya** and asked that we pray for all those who are being persecuted by their own government.
- The Archbishop has written to the Right Revd Victoria Matthews, Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Christchurch in **New Zealand** offering our condolences and prayer for all those affected by the earthquake. Please keep them in your prayers as they deal with their loss and try to rebuild their city and lives.
- Please pray for **Bishop Sitembele's** wife Tobeka who is recovering from eye surgery.
- The Very Revd Richard David Fenwick, Dean of Monmouth and Vicar of the parish of Newport Cathedral, South Wales, UK has been elected as the new bishop for the **Diocese of St Helena**. He is married to Jane and has 2 adult children, James and Rachel. Please pray for him and his wife as they prepare for this new ministry as well as for the people of St Helena.

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Diocesan Family News

- The Prayer Diary will be late this month because **Noxolo** is still off sick. Please would you pray for healing for her and for wisdom for her doctors who have not yet been able to pinpoint the problem.
- **Sharmain James** will be inducted as Rector of the Parish of St Luke, Bosmont at 15h00 on Sunday the 13th of March. We hope that you will make every effort to attend.
- **Steve Moreo** will be inducted as Rector of the Parish of St George, Parktown at 15h00 on Sunday the 27th of March. An invitation has been extended to all in the Diocese to attend this service.

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Moves and Placements

- **Paul Germond** has joined the Diocese as a full-time stipendiary clergy person and has been appointed as Rector of the Parish of St Augustine, Brixton. We welcome Paul to the full-time ministry and wish him all the best in his new role.
- **Ian Stevens**, one of the Chaplain's at St John's College, has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of St John, Houghton. Bishop Duncan will remain in the parish as an LOP.
- **Mlungisi Ntsele** has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of St Cyprian, Doornkop with effect from the 1st of March.
- It is with regret that we inform you that, following a disciplinary hearing, **Stephen-Damien Walker** has been suspended from all ministry in this Diocese. Please keep him in your prayers.

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Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries

We would like to wish the following people a very happy birthday and wedding anniversary:-

MARCH		APRIL	
1 st	Roy Collins	1 st	Cecil Lamb
1 st	Mathabo Dlwati	3 rd	Joe & Mary Maboe (W/A)
1 st	David Butcher	3 rd	Nigel Mollink
3 rd	Peter Roberts	4 th	Kenneth & Hilary Owen (W/A)
4 th	Primrose Seku	5 th	Morgan & Lynette Ellis (W/A)
5 th	Pearl Sharp	5 th	Doug & Vanessa Michael (W/A)
6 th	Chris & Maureen Rowland-Aitken	7 th	Tshepo Maloka
8 th	Errol Dengler	7 th	Nelly Ramoabi
10 th	Peter Witbooi	8 th	Martin Louw
15 th	Roseline Beart	10 th	Tim & Rosemary Gray (W/A)
16 th	Eugenia Zeka	10 th	Peter Wilson
16 th	Kim Jacobs	10 th	Keith & Pam Berning (W/A)
16 th	Gill Lee	11 th	Cyril Halkett
17 th	Ethel Mbalula	14 th	Oupaki Moruthane
17 th	Charles Germond	15 th	Mothusimang Makata
20 th	Steve Moreo	15 th	Paul Siaki
20 th	Geoff Paxton	16 th	Doug Wessels
21 st	Beatrice Mpuu	16 th	Loreen McDougall
22 nd	Helen Smith	16 th	Liziwe Moreo
22 nd	Kgoro Mogami	17 th	Bill Salter
23 rd	Meshack Nhlapo	17 th	Bikitsha Njumbuxa
25 th	Sedupe Ramokgopa	17 th	Mmalerato Molwantwa
27 th	Beverley Longbottom	18 th	Cecil & Pamela Lamb (W/A)
29 th	Jeanette Ross	20 th	Fred & Merle Robb (W/A)
29 th	John Whyte	20 th	David Edwards
29 th	Mottalepula Namu	21 st	Paul Letlala
30 th	Douglas Torr	22 nd	Eileen Wanckel
31 st	Paul & Ntombi Molefe (W/A)	23 rd	+Duncan
31 st	Rosemary Gray	23 rd	Mary Maboe

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Dates for Diary

MARCH		Parish	Diocesan	Bishop
Tuesday	1	Independent Schools Open / Clergy Day	Clergy Day	Clergy Day
Saturday	5		STILIM & FOX I / Anglicare	
Sunday	6		Archdeaconry Region 1 Admission of Churchwarden & Council	Pastoral visit: Emdeni
Tuesday	8	SHROVE TUESDAY		
Wednesday	9	ASH WEDNESDAY		
Saturday	12		FOX II / JDACF Spiritual Formation / Parish Minister Training / Bishop meets Churchwardens	Bishop meets Churchwardens

Sunday	13			Pastoral visit: East Bank / Induction of Rector at Bosmont 15h00
Tuesday	15	Final date for Vestry		Media Meeting
Wednesday	16		Archdeacons Meeting	Archdeacons Meeting
Thursday	17			Publishing Committee
Saturday	19		Ordinands / Transformers	LEAVE
Sunday	20		Choir Fellowship, St J Diepkloof	LEAVE
Monday	21	HUMAN RIGHTS DAY		LEAVE
Tuesday	22		Archdeaconry Region 1 Clergy Quiet Day	
Friday	25	Government Schools Close		
Saturday	26		POST	SAINTS - Preparing for Easter
Sunday	27			Pastoral visit: Houghton / Institution of Rector at Parktown 15h00
Thursday	31			Bishop Bavin Strategic Planning

APRIL		Parish	Diocesan	Bishop
Friday	1	Parish Accounts to Diocesan Office		
Saturday	2		STILIM & FOX I	Diocesan Institutions Conference
Sunday	3			Pastoral visit: Senoane
Monday	4			JIF
Tuesday	5		Region 2 Archdeaconry Clergy Day	Formal Tribunal
Wednesday	6		Management Team Dinner	Formal Tribunal / Management Team Dinner
Friday	8	Independent Schools Close		
Saturday	9		FOX II	
Sunday	10			Pastoral visit: Ruimsig
Monday	11	Government Schools Open		
Saturday	16		Ordinands / Transformers / Anglicare	
Sunday	17	PALM SUNDAY	Choir Fellowship, Mohlakeng	
Wednesday	20		DFB	
Friday	22	GOOD FRIDAY		Yeoville
Sunday	24	EASTER		Yeoville
Monday	25	FAMILY DAY		Retreat
Tuesday	26		Diocesan Office Closed	Retreat
Wednesday	27	FREEDOM DAY		Retreat
Thursday	28			Retreat
Friday	29			Retreat
Saturday	30			Retreat

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General Notices

- The Parish of Holy Cross has recently held their farewell service for Steve Moreo. I have attached a copy of their **Liturgy of Release** (called Prayers of Release) for other parishes who might find it useful.
- "**Park Views**" is a series of short talks, on current issues, presented by experts, sometimes living in Parkview. The talks take place at St. Francis, Parkview. On Thursday 10th March at 6pm sharp, Dr. Lynette Coetzee will talk on the "Phelophepa

Health Care Train", which, for 35 weeks of the year, travels through rural South Africa rendering eye and health care and supplying medication and health education to thousands of people living in rural areas. All are welcome!

- An email copy of the new **Diocesan Directory** will be distributed by email shortly. Please remember that this email copy is for Clergy and Parish Offices. The Directory on the website is intended for a wider audience. The printed copies of the Directory will be available by the 1st of May at which point a number of moves currently in discussion will have been finalized.

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