

AD CLERUM – JULY 2011

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

All of us are familiar with the story of the Exodus and of how Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years. For many years Susan has jokingly maintained that the only reason Israel was lost for 40 years was because Moses, being a man, would not stop and ask for directions. Women readers are probably more likely than men to find this amusing, but it does beg the question as to why Israel took so long to cover what could have easily been covered in weeks rather than years.

There are a number of reasons for this:-

- Exodus 13: 17-18 tells us that “When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, ‘If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.’ So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.” Thus the choice of the longer desert road is presented as yet another sign of God’s unfathomable love for Israel. The longer, harder road is the way of grace.
- Set free from their Egyptian bondage, Israel is not left to its own devices; God is with them, leading them along the way and demonstrating an ongoing love for them in signs and wonders. The wilderness years are thus also a time of ongoing dependency on the generous provision of God and an experience of God’s compassion and goodness over an extended period of time.
- It is a time of pilgrimage; a time of testing and growth in faithfulness as they journey to a promised land. It is the journey with many backward glances and the longing for the good old days, but it is always an invitation into newness of life and the promise of the blessings that will be theirs through trust and obedience.

These reasons, while by no means exhaustive, seem to me to capture the essence of the pilgrim journey. It is the way of grace, no matter how difficult it may seem at times. It is a journey in which God is continually active and present. It is a gently unfolding process of transformation that always holds the promise that the best is yet to come. Pilgrimage is an exercise in patient trust if for no other reason than because transformation is always a slow process that cannot be rushed. But it can be retarded and hindered.

The story of the Golden Calf is the story of an Israel impatient for action and willing even to create a god who would do for them what they wanted for themselves. And that, of course, is what idolatry is all about; our willingness to pursue false gods who we think will give us our heart’s desire. Part of the problem is that we usually do not know what our heart’s desire truly is. And that was true for Israel in the wilderness. They had been for so long a slave people that, even though they had been set free, they still had a slave mentality. Real transformation was not about satisfying their immediate wants, but meant nothing less than becoming a new creation – a change from their old slave mentality to that of a holy nation, a people called and set apart to be a light to the world. (I think that this is what lies at the

heart of Tom Wright's assertion that the exile does not end with the return of the Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem, but with the coming of Christ. Only in Christ can Israel truly become a new creation.

The answer, therefore, to the question as to why Israel took years on a journey that needed no more than a few weeks is simply this: they needed the time for growth and transformation. And the question that confronts us both as church and nation is how long it will take for us to reach the promised land. How long will we continue to wander in a wilderness of our own making that is shaped by the racist mindset that lay at the heart of apartheid? And will we be catalysts of transformation or will we retard the process?

Someone recently commented in a meeting that one of the major problems confronting South Africa is that the huge economic and cultural discrepancies that exist mean that we live in very different realities and that we have no common vision about where we are going, or even where we want to go. We are living in the wilderness, on a journey from slavery to the freedom of kingdom life in Christ. And many of the freedoms we are striving for and clutching at are idolatrous illusions that will hamper our journey.

We are a pilgrim people – called by baptism to be transformed into the likeness of Christ and to be agents of God's transformation of our world. Our pilgrim journey is one walked in trust and obedience to God, with a constant awareness of God at work in our lives and in our land. We need to affirm and rejoice in what God is doing, and to challenge and disassociate ourselves from all that is not building God's kingdom.

How long will we wander in the wilderness? How long will we hold an exile mentality? The answer is simple: until we as a pilgrim people can truly pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

For self reflection:

1. As a leader in the things of God, is my life a moral beacon for the world around me? What in my life needs changing in order that the light of Christ might shine more brightly?
2. What are the false gods in the world around me that entice me, demand my loyalty and distract me from the things of God?
3. What are my hopes and dreams for South Africa? What is God's vision for us?

For group discussion:

1. How do we nurture the sense of our being a pilgrim people on a journey towards transformation and newness of life? How do we support one another along the pilgrim way? How can we better support, nurture and help each other in a spirit of love and out of a real desire to help each of us become more fully formed in Christ?
2. Do we as a pilgrim people share a common vision and do we work together for the building of the kingdom? What changes do we need to make?

May God's kingdom come, here on earth as it is in heaven

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Spiritual Formation

Clergy Day: The next Clergy Day will take place on Tuesday the 5th of July at the Parish of St Monnica, Halfway Garden. The topic will focus on current environmental issues.

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Reading Recommendations

I have recently been working through “**The Book of Genesis**” by Clare Amos and would recommend it unreservedly to all of you. It is one of the Epworth series of commentaries and is a wonderful blend of modern scholarly research and theological insights into spirituality of the Bible. It is an exciting book to read and I have found that it has both challenged and inspired me. It is available at Herald Christian Books.

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St Joseph's

Under the project management of Peter McMurray, work on St Joseph's is progressing rapidly. The roof has been painted and work on the floors is at an advanced state. Rotten flooring has been removed and much of the sanding of the doors and windows is complete. We have sourced new wood to match the existing floors and once that arrives the floors will be completed. The south western block (soon to be the new home of our Provincial Publishing Department) is in an advanced stage of refurbishment. The carpenter has converted one of the back rooms into a workshop and visitors can expect to see a hive of activity as the wood is refurbished to its once pristine state. An electrician has now begun re-wiring the building.

Because of the work being done, some meetings that usually take place at St Joseph's will need to be rescheduled. The Transformers meeting on 16th of July has been moved to Christ the King, Sophiatown. Sue Cramer will inform FOX, Ordinands and POST members of any venue changes by email or sms. Please ensure that she has your current email addresses or cell phone numbers

The alterations come at a huge cost. We thank the Capital Development Fund of St Martin's-in-the-Veld and the Parish of Bryanston for their contributions and ask all of you to discuss in your parish council how you can contribute to this exciting project.

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Provincial News

- Please find attached a copy of the Archbishop's most recent **Laos**.
- The Archbishop has asked that all of us, throughout Province, pray for Sudan. He has written the following prayer:-

'Lord of all, we join our prayers to those of your children in Sudan, in their tears and pain, especially those of South Kordofan, and all who suffer conflict or violence.

God of Justice, bring your justice wherever there is strife, killing or displacement.

God of Peace, bring your peace which passes all understanding to yearning hearts.

Move the powerful to compassion and mercy,

Strengthen the weak even as they face persecution,

And raise up the nations of this world and all people of good will in opposition to these atrocious acts.

Hasten the dawning of the day when all your children, and especially those in Sudan,

can live according to your peace and harmony.

We pray this in the name of God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN'

- The AGM of the **Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute** will take place at 19h00 on Tuesday the 19th of July at the Diakonia Centre in Durban. The theme is 'Global climate talks 2011 (COP17) in Durban – so what?'

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Diocesan Family News

- Please find a copy of the **July Prayer Diary** attached.
- A copy of the **Diocesan Rules**, with all the amendments promulgated at the last Synod, is available on the website. An electronic copy will be emailed to all clergy and churchwardens. Should your parish require a hard copy please contact the Diocesan office.
- The parish of St Augustine, Orange Grove will be hosting a **Youth Alpha course!** All youth between the ages of 15 and 23 are invited to an introductory dinner at the parish from 18h30 – 21h00 (so you can still have your Friday night out!) on Friday the 22nd of July. If you're interested in attending please phone Liz (082 459 9379), Wendy (083 325 4694) or the office (011 640 5640) to give us an idea of numbers for catering purposes. If you would like to advertise this more extensively in your parish please visit the website for a poster with all the details.
- As **Mandela Day** approaches we encourage each of you to think and pray about how you can spend your 67 minutes of good on the 18th of July. Many parishes already have initiatives you can get involved in, or visit the new Heartlines site www.forgood.co.za for additional ideas.

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Moves and Placements

- **Jacqueline Williams** will be moving to the parish of St Margaret of Scotland, Bedfordview with effect from the 1st of July. We wish Jacque all the best in her ministry there.

- **Jack Williamson** has decided to go into full retirement and as such has not applied for the renewal of his LOP at the Parish of Rangeview. Along with the parish we wish him all the best.

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Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries

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

Date	July	August
01	Tebogo May Barrie & Val Lodge(45)	Jos Mncube
02		Stewart Basson Dan Ngqumeya Michelle Pilet
03	Yvonne Meyers +Brian & Susan Germond(40)	
04	Morgan Ellis Lyn Bewsher	Trevor & Gwyn Slade(38) Gerald & Margaret Steward(32) Gaby Tucker
05	Trevor Slade	Mandisa Nxumalo
06	Eunice Marubelela Barbara Siaki	
07	John Westwood	Ian Stevens
08		Archie Motaung
09	Wendy Mollink Ian Lane Allan & Linda Williams(37)	
10	John Ntsoko	Alinah Mohomane
11		Gavin Smith Geoff & Christine Lowick(46)
12	Wilhelm & Liz Klingenberg(42)	Koto Moloji
13	Joe Maboe Alfred Khumalo	
14	Liz Klingenberg	
15		Meshack & Nombuyiselo Nhlapo(38)
17		Bradley Moloji Tshepo & Mamosebetsi Maloka
18	Rodney Taylor	
19		George Boyce Lynette Wessels Abegail Tserere
21	Xolani Dlwati Gerard & Pearl Sharp(27)	
22	Eric Richardson	Wouter Uitzinger Sue Waldron
23		Gerald Steward Ian & Wendy Macintosh(53)
24	Precious Chaane	Jeremy Jacobs
25	Mamosebetsi Maloka Helen Els	Zanele Mtshali
26	Paul Germond	Molebe Mosima
27		Roy & Barbara Collins(45)
28	Bernice Stevens David Eades	Rusty & Paddy Seller(46)
31	Ranthite Namu	Motshabi Motlabane

Nomhle Moselane
Erna Basson
Sarah Van der Watt

We appreciate feedback – especially when we've forgotten someone's special day so please do contact Noxolo at the Diocesan office with any updates or amendments.

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Dates for Diary

JULY		Parish	Diocesan	Bishop
Friday	1	Independent Schools Half Term		
Saturday	2		STILIM & FOX I	
Tuesday	5	Clergy Day	Clergy Day	Retreat
Saturday	9		FOX II / JDACF Spiritual Formation / Anglicare / Parish Ministers Training	Leave
Monday	11	Independent Schools Open		Leave
Saturday	16		Ordinands / Transformers	Leave
Sunday	17		Choir Fellowship, Jabavu	Leave
Monday	18	Mandela Day / Government Schools Open		
Saturday	23		POST	
Sunday	24			Pastoral visit: Mzimhlope
Wednesday	27		DFB	
Saturday	30		AWF Quiet Day / SAINTS	
Sunday	31			Pastoral Visit: Krugersdorp

AUGUST		Parish	Diocesan	Bishop
Tuesday	2	Clergy Day	Clergy Day	Clergy Day
Wednesday	3		Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Thursday	4		Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Friday	5	Independent Schools Close	Strategic Management Planning	Strategic Management Planning
Saturday	6		FOX I	
Sunday	7			Pastoral Visit: Sunninghill
Tuesday	9	NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY	National AWF Prayer Day	
Saturday	13		FOX II / Parish Minister Training	FOX II 13h45 - 16h00
Sunday	14			Pastoral Visit: St Thomas, Kagiso
Tuesday	16		Archdeaconry Region 1, 2 & 4 Clergy Day	
Wednesday	17		Management Meeting	Management Meeting
Saturday	20		Ordinands / Transformers / Archdeaconry Region 1 Council Meeting / Anglicare	Transformers
Sunday	21			Pastoral visit: St Barts, Kagiso
Saturday	27		JDACF Elimination / POST / SAINTS	Self Supporting Clergy Day
Sunday	28			Pastoral visit: Meadowlands (Feast of Dedication) 50th anniversary
Monday	29			Diocese of Natal Elective Assembly
Tuesday	30			Diocese of Natal Elective Assembly
Wednesday	31			Diocese of Natal Elective Assembly

Bishop's diary is always very full. Should you have any special events in 2012 I would encourage you to submit those dates now to ensure that Bishop is available to attend.

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General Notices

- The Parish of **Manche Masemola**, East Bank will be leading a pilgrimage to Manche Masemola's grave in the Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist. The pilgrimage will take place from the 6th to the 7th of August. Should you be interested in learning more about this please visit our website.
- **Africa Ablaze** will be hosting a conference in Durban from the 20th – 22nd September. For more details please visit our website.

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