

AD CLERUM – January 2008

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ

Although the words, “Greed is good,” were immortalised in the film, ‘Wall Street,’ the words simply echo those of stock speculator Ivan Boesky who, in his 1986 UCLA Berkeley’s School of Business Administration Commencement speech, told the audience that “greed is healthy.” Whether greed is, indeed, ‘good’ or ‘healthy’ is not really open to moral debate, but I think it is significant that the commencement audience cheered the words and film was an Oscar-winning box-office hit, ‘Wall Street,’ when one of its characters, Gordon Gekko, immortalised the words. And the Christmas consumer frenzy is ample proof that, no matter how morally reprehensible greed might be, ‘greed is good’.

As we begin a new year, I find myself wondering whether 2008 will just be ‘more of the same’, or whether there will bring any real change in the hearts and lives of people. And if so, what role will the church play in such change? For I am convinced that real change will not come through economic empowerment, nor political rhetoric, but only through the transforming power of God at work in our lives.

At our Strategic Planning Meeting at the end of last year, we spent some time looking at the role of the church in our current context. Massive unemployment and poverty, unacceptable levels of crime, violence and corruption, rising rates of HIV infection and a health system in crisis – these are but a few of the litany of woes that shape the social fabric in which we minister. Others in the litany are, perhaps, less obvious, but no less sinister – the loss of our traditions and values, the breakdown of community, rising individualism and consumerism coupled with a lack of accountability; all of these threaten our fragile life together and cause us to look for scapegoats and to latch on to potential rescuers and heroes, no matter how flawed they might be.

Tim Long spoke of us as a traumatised nation living in a “context of trauma”. That phrase resonated deeply with all of us and we spent a great deal of time discussing our call to be God’s people in a time of trauma. We recognised that we were ‘sleeping through a revolution,’ and that, if we are to have any credibility as a church, we need to be boldly taking the lead and showing the way. And we can only do so from a position of moral integrity and faithful prayerfulness.

As we reflected on our role as leaders and as church we found ourselves asking how we would like to be remembered 20 years from now. What came through strongly in our discussion is that, if we are living in a context of trauma, the church must be a place of healing. As wounded healers we need to be a place of refuge and safety, a place where those who are broken will be welcomed and received into a community that will help them make sense of their world and their lives and will speak words of comfort and

consolation as readily as we speak words that bring hope and evoke a longing in us for a new and different world in which despair is forever routed and love becomes rooted in our daily experience.

That requires of us a recovery of the art of preaching. Nothing leads to diminished lives as much as preaching that is reduced to pious platitudes; preaching that has become trite words *about* God rather than life-giving words *from* God. Preaching is prophetic; God's spoken Word for this day in this place. As such it is always subversive, undermining and breaking open the context of trauma that is the world created by the rulers of this age with the surprising promise of a kingdom that is not of this world in which all things are made new. Preaching is subversive and prophetic; offering an opportunity to live lives shaped by the good news of the gospel, an invitation to live on holy ground.

In his wonderful book, 'The Contemplative Pastor,' Eugene Peterson speaks of three kinds of language. Language II and III are the ones most familiar to us for they are the ascendant languages of our culture, the languages of information and motivation. Most of what we hear is presented in that kind of language and it is significant that most of our preaching and all of our teaching is done in that kind of languages.

Language I is the first language we learn and, though never forgotten, is seldom used. It is the language of intimacy learned in the arms of our parents in cooing sounds and nonsense syllables and whispered words of comfort. Much of it uses the same words that will form the basis of the other two kinds of language, but the communication is altogether different. Language I is rich in meaning, but short on content. It is the soothing language of love and relationship which builds intimacy and trust, and it the only language adequate to the reality of our deepest passions. It is foundational language, the language of parents and lovers, poets and prophets and preachers.

The Roman Catholic scholar, Hans Urs van Balthasar, says: "God needs prophets in order to make himself known, and all prophets are necessarily artistic. What a prophet has to say can never be said in prose." Brueggemann says the same thing when he speaks of preachers as being "poets that speak against a prose world." Preaching is not about information, or motivation, but is the voice of the one who is love and who can only be evoked and invoked in the language of intimacy. Preaching is the Word made Fresh.

If we are to counter the voice that speaks into the context of trauma and proclaims that 'greed is good;' that happiness can be found in gathering more and more for oneself and ignoring the pain of others, and that freedom is about doing whatever we want without concern or consideration for others, we must speak words that will again kindle hope and trust and love in a world that is starved for all three. If 2008 is going to be different from the year that is past, then that difference will depend on those who know that the present way is not the only way and not only have the calling and the courage to proclaim that boldly to the world, but also the will to live it in a community of faith that is a place of refuge and safety for all and a source of healing in the midst of suffering.

What is God's prophetic word that he calls us to preach today? Will we spend enough time with the Lord to hear that word and will we be faithful enough to receive it, proclaim it and live it? A lot depends on the answers to those questions. In 20 years time history will tell us whether we will be remembered as a church who had lost its bearings

and was as traumatised and confused as the world around us, or as a people of God faithful to the living word of God who led a nation on the road from Polokwane into a Promised Land infinitely greater than any promised by the politicians of trauma.

May 2008 be the Year of the Word made Fresh,

+ Brian

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Revised Prayer for Africa

The Prayer for Africa was prayed at every service in every parish throughout the years of transition. We need to be praying it today as much as ever. I recently came across a revised version of it in 'iindaba' the newsletter of the Diocese of Port Elizabeth and commend it to you. It reads:-

God bless Africa
Protect her children
Transform her leaders
Heal her communities
Restore her dignity
And give her peace.

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Year-Planner 2008 – The Yellow Pages

The Yellow Pages for 2008 together with a covering letter of explanation should have been e-mailed to you just before the Diocesan Office closed. If you did not receive it please ask Zodwa to resend it. Please read the information carefully and highlight all dates of importance to you and your parish. Please make sure that those dates are entered into your 2008 diary as well as the parish diary and that everyone in your parish knows all the dates that apply to them.

Having expressed the hope in my covering letter of explanation that everything would be as far as possible correct, someone (not from that Archdeaconry) has drawn my attention to the fact that the Far West Archdeaconry was not allocated a confirmation date in October. I apologise for the omission and have corrected it. The Far West confirmation will take place in the morning of Saturday 18th October. Please correct your copy of the Yellow Pages.

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Ordinations 2008

The Yellow Pages made provision for two ordinations services – an ordination to the priesthood on 2nd February and to the diaconate on 9th February. Because of the small number of those being ordained at each of the ordinations, it has been decided to combine them and to hold one ordination service for both the diaconate and priesthood at 14h00 on Saturday 2nd February.

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Vestry 2008

Many parishes have already set the date for Vestry and are already preparing for it. If you have not yet done so, I urge you to do so. Below is an extract from the new Parish Handbook that will replace the old Parish Guide when published. The extract includes a time line for Vestry, some details about Vestry itself (including the agenda for Vestry, and what is expected in terms of Churchwardens Reports and the Rector's Statement of Needs), and the Vestry Returns to the Diocesan Office. I hope that this extract will prove helpful and would appreciate your comments and suggestions in respect of it.

1. General Instructions:

These instructions apply equally to parishes and chapelries.

- i) **Final Date of Vestry:** Vestry must be held before *15 March* in each year.
- iii) **Financial Statements:** The Annual Vestry cannot be held until the Annual Financial Statements for the preceding year have been completed and either professionally audited or verified by an independent verifier approved by the diocese.
- iv) **Five Year Limit:** Anyone who has been a member of the Parish Council or a Churchwarden for five years of unbroken service is not eligible for re-election. A member of the Parish Council may be elected as Churchwarden at any stage in the five year period of service and may then serve as Churchwarden for a further 5 years. However, a Churchwarden who has completed a five year term of office may not be elected as a Parish Councillor.
- v) **Only laity may nominate and serve:** Only the laity may nominate people to serve as Churchwardens and Parish Councillors, and only the laity are eligible for nomination to serve as are churchwardens and Parish Councillors.
- vi) **Elections and Scrutineers:** Voting shall be by secret ballot. Scrutineers for the voting must be agreed to by Vestry and may not include the Rector or Priest-in-Charge.

2. Action Flow Chart for Annual Vestry:

- i) **End of Year:** Complete financial statements except for final adjustments.
- ii) **January:** Complete financial statements and send to auditor / independent verifier. Check when financials will be ready and set date for Vestry. Vestry must be before 15 March. Allow space for unforeseen delays.
- iii) **At least 22 days before Vestry:** Publish and display written *Notice of Vestry*. The notice must be signed by Rector and Churchwardens and must give the place, date, time, and agenda of Vestry. The Agenda for Vestry is set out in Rule H – 3 and in Direction 3 below .
- iv) **At least 22 days before Vestry:** Lists calling for *Nominations for Churchwardens and Councillors* must be put on the notice board. Nomination forms must be signed by the proposer, seconder and by the person being proposed.
- v) **The Sunday before Vestry:** (Or at least 6 days before Vestry) Nominations close.

3. Annual Vestry:

- i) **Chairperson of Vestry:** The Rector is normally the Chairperson of Vestry. Consult Rule H – 1.7.1 if the Rector is not available.
- ii) **Quorum at Vestry:** Ten parishioners form a quorum.
- iii) **Right to Speak at Vestry:** Only regular worshipers and those whose names appear on the Parish Roll shall have the right to speak. Good manners must always be observed.
- iii) **Agenda of Vestry:** The Annual Vestry Meeting will deal with the following business in the following order:-
 - o Confirmation of minutes of previous Annual Vestry Meeting
 - o Presentation by Churchwardens of audited or verified annual accounts. Note: Accounts must be accepted by Vestry before moving on the next item of business.
 - o Report by Churchwardens on condition of Church property, which report must be received by Vestry and a copy forwarded to the Diocesan Office together with the required Vestry returns. Note: In addition to the churchwardens report shall include how they have fulfilled their duties in respect of the following:-
 - The provision and adequacy of computer, fax, internet, photocopying ,and telephone services for the parish;
 - Adjustment of insurance cover for to ensure adequate cover for parish property;
 - An annual review of the Memorandum of Understanding between parish clergy and parish council;
 - Confirmation that proper records and inventories as required by the Canons and Rules of the Diocese have been kept.
 - o Report by Rector on care of the parish including a statement of needs, which report must be received by Vestry and either accepted or amended. A copy of this report must be sent to the Diocese together with the required Vestry returns. The report shall include:-
 - An evaluation of parish ministry over the past year, together with a report on the areas where there has been growth or decline that ministry, especially in respect of the key points of the Diocesan Vision;
 - A statement of the goals and objectives of the Parish Council set in respect of the coming year;
 - The identification of any areas requiring special attention either because of circumstances that have arisen in the life of the parish or the wider community.
 - o Presentation by Churchwardens of budget for ensuing year. Report must be received by Vestry and accepted or amended.
 - o A decision by Vestry on the number of persons who will serve on Council.
 - o Election of Churchwardens and Parish Councillors for ensuing year.
 - o Appointment of auditor or independent verifier for ensuing year.
 - o No other business may be transacted.

4. **Vestry Returns to Diocesan Office:**

Within one week of Vestry, the Rector must ensure that the following documents are submitted to the Diocesan Secretary:-

- o Copy of the audited or verified Financial Statements;
- o Copy of the budget for present year;
- o Copies of the Churchwarden's Report and the Rector's Statement of Needs;
- o Declaration of those elected as Churchwardens, Alternate Churchwardens, and Parish Councillors (duly signed by all persons elected).

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Spiritual Formation

Open Door Retreat: We have two Open Door Retreats planned for this year; the first starting 12th January, the second on 12th August. The Open Door Retreat is an

introduction to Ignatian spirituality and if you have not yet done one, I would encourage you to join one of these. Space is limited and the January Open Door is already almost full. So book now to attend.

- **Clergy Day:** Our first Clergy Day for 2008 will be on Tuesday 5th February and will be held at St Joseph's Home. Meeting at St Joseph's Home will provide us with an opportunity to discuss the development plans for our new Diocesan Centre. I hope that you will all be there and that you will leave as excited about the possibilities for our Centre as I am.

Clergy Quiet Day: Our Lenten Diocesan Quiet Day at Bishop's House will be on Tuesday, 19th February 2008. I am hoping that our Diocesan Quiet Days will be significantly better attended this year. Please highlight the day in your diary now and refuse all other requests for meetings on that day. Prayer is central to your effectiveness in ministry.

Clergy Marriage Course: The Marriage Course from Holy Trinity, Brompton, is a tough, challenging course intended to strengthen your marriage. Susan and I ran one such course for clergy a couple of years ago and have been asked a number of times to repeat it. We will be doing so, starting on 13th April. We can only accommodate about 8 couples, so book your place now.

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Reading Recommendations

- Joan Chittister has been a profound and exciting spiritual voice for over thirty years. Her most recent book, "In the Heart of the Temple" is a collection of some of her most celebrated essays – a sort of a 'Best of Chittister' book. I found it challenging and stimulating and recommend it to you all.

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STILIM Lay Training Programme

There are still a few places for parish lay leaders. Please encourage your parish to participate – it will be of enormous value for you to have lay leadership who have a clearer understanding of our diocesan vision and can support you more fully in what you are trying to do. The 8 week course will be held from 09h00 – 12h30 on the 2nd Saturday of each month, February – May and July – October, starting on the 9th February 2008. Application forms are obtainable from the Diocesan office. For more information please contact Darryl Cotton on Tel: 084-526-8866; 011-794-4198 (home); 011-954-6618 (office); or email: dcotton@axxess.co.za.

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Lenten Appeal

Our Lenten Appeal for 2008 is for the Clergy Welfare Committee. A number of our clergy and catechists retired before the stipend adjustments and this, coupled with the fact that pension increases have not always kept pace with inflation, means that many of our clergy, catechists and their widows and families struggle to make ends meet. We need to show our appreciation of their faithful and often sacrificial service by ensuring that they are able to live without ongoing anxiety and worry. Please promote this in your parish and encourage your people to give generously.

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Dates for Diary

JANUARY 2008

Tues 1 st	NEW YEAR'S DAY	
Wed 2 nd	Start finalising financial statements for Vestry	
Wed 9 th	<i>Independent Schools Open</i>	
Sun 13 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Mon 14 th	Diocesan Office Strategic Planning:	
Tues 15 th	Diocesan Office Strategic Planning:	
Wed 16 th	<i>Government Schools Open</i>	
Wed 16 th	Management Team Meeting: Parktown	08h30-16h00
Thurs 17 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Sat 19 th	SfM Ordinands' Programme:	
Sun 20 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Wed 23 rd	Trustees Meeting: J.P.Centre, Bishop's House, Westcliff	16h30
Thurs 24 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Sat 26 th	SfM FOV Programme:	
Sun 27 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Sun 27 th	SfM Worship Training:	
Mon 28 th	Ordination Retreat: St Benedict's House, Rosettenville	
Tues 29 th	Ordination Retreat: St Benedict's House, Rosettenville	
Wed 30 th	Ordination Retreat: St Benedict's House, Rosettenville	
Thurs 31 st	Ordination Retreat: St Benedict's House, Rosettenville	

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FEBRUARY 2008

Fri 1 st	Ordination Rehearsal: Cathedral	10h00
Sat 2 nd	SfM: Ordinands' Programme:	
Sat 2 nd	B Mizeki Opening Revival: Bekkersdal	20h00
Sat 2 nd	Ordination of Priests: Cathedral	
Sun 3 rd	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Tues 5 th	Clergy Day:	09h00-12h30
Wed 6 th	ASH WEDNESDAY	
Wed 6 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Sat 9 th	STILIM Lay Training:	
Sat 9 th	Ordination of Deacons:	
Sat 9 th	Mothers' Union: AGM	
Sat 9 th	A.W.F: AGM	
Sun 10 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Tues 12 th	St Benedict's Spiritual Formation Group: Rosettenville	
Wed 13 th	Ministry / Portfolio Leadership Meetings:	
Thurs 14 th	<i>Independent Schools ½ Term Starts</i>	

Thurs 14 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Fri 15 th	B Mizeki: Executive (St Mary's, Dobsonville)	18h00
Sat 16 th	Recommended final date for notice of Vestry and lists for nominations	
Sat 16 th	SfM Diaconate:	
Sat 16 th	A.M.F: Council (St Barth's, Kagiso)	09h00
Sat 16 th	Joburg North Confirmation Camp	
Sun 17 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Tues 19 th	<i>Independent Schools ½ Term Ends</i>	
Tues 19 th	Bishop's House Quiet Day	
Thurs 20 th	Bishop's Archdeaconry Visit: Krugersdorp	
Sat 23 rd	SfM: FOV Programme:	
Sat 23 rd	Parish Renewal for Declining Parishes:	
Sat 23 rd	B Mizeki: Provincial Council Meeting (Umtata)	
Sun 24 th	B Mizeki: Provincial Council Meeting (Umtata)	
Sun 24 th	SfM: Worship Training:	
Mon 25 th	Retirement Housing Committee:	
Wed 27 th	Diocesan Finance Board: JP Centre, Bishop's House	16h30

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Moves, Appointments and Vacancies

- **Stephen Damien-Walker** will be licensed as Chaplain of St Barnabas College at 08h00 on Wednesday 9 January. The Venerable Martin Louw will do the licensing.
- **Michael Oliphant** begins as Rector of All Saints, Fourways Gardens, on the 15th January. Pray for him and Bridgette and their family as they begin this new ministry.
- We thank **Gary Thompson** for the sterling work that he did as Interim Pastor of All Saints, Fourways Gardens. He will continue as chaplain at St Peter's College, but will be taking a short sabbatical from Sunday duties before his next appointment.
- **Dan Molwantwa** has been appointed Rector of St Francis, Newclare with effect from 1 February. Please pray for them Dan and his family as they prepare for this move. We thank **Priscilla Everson** for her care of the parish during the interregnum.

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Family News

Provincial News:

- **Bishop Thabo Makgoba** was collated as Archbishop of Cape Town on 31 December 2007 and is now officially in office. He will be enthroned at the end of March. Please keep Thabo, Lungi and the children in your prayers during this difficult time of transition.

- Cindy, the daughter of **Bishop Leslie Walker** and his wife Marian, died tragically early in December. Please remember them all in your prayers.

Diocesan News:

- **Sipho Masemola** was in hospital briefly following chest pains. Please pray for healing for Sipho and continue to hold him and Nono in your prayers.
- **Mary Maboe** has also been in hospital. Please pray for healing for her and Joe.
- **Dorothy Germond** is in ICU with chest pains. Please pray for her and for Charles.
- **Lee-Ann Minakium** has had yet another death in her family. Please remember Lee-Ann and all her family in your prayers in what has been an extended period of bereavement.
- **Nigel Mollink** is on leave for 2 months following prolonged back problems. Please pray for a speedy healing and pray for Wendy as she cares for him.

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BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES:

Please remember the following persons in your prayers as they celebrate birthdays and anniversaries in the coming months:

January Birthdays and Anniversaries:

1 st	Thembi Ramokgopa	2 nd	Athol Wanckel
3 rd	Alison Viljoen	3 rd	Merle Robb
3 rd	Peter & Agnes Witbooi (W/A)	4 th	Shirley Anderson
5 th	Nigel & Gill Andrews (W/A)	6 th	Cynthia Botha
6 th	Hazel Halkett	7 th	Ernie Quickfall
7 th	John & Gail Westwood (W/A)	7 th	Thembi Maseko
9 th	Barry Beckley	10 th	Wray Whyte
11 th	Doug Michael	14 th	John Herbert
14 th	Alf & Maud Khumalo (W/A)	15 th	Archie & Thokozile Motaung (W/A)
15 th	John & Lorraine Williamson (W/A)	16 th	Karen Uitzinger
16 th	Dennis & Rosalie Francis (W/A)	17 th	Pamela Lamb
18 th	Lorraine Williamson	18 th	+Sigi & Dorcas Ndwandwe (W/A)
19 th	Abel Molefe	19 th	Bridget Edwards
19 th	Boitumelo Makata	21 st	+Brian
21 st	Saras Chinnah	25 th	Joe Rakale
22 nd	Diana Buchanan	25 th	John & Florence Ntsoko (W/A)
25 th	Jeanne Boyce	26 th	Christine Lowick
26 th	Trevor Prince	27 th	John & Wray Whyte (W/A)
28 th	Ntabiseng Moswatlhe	28 th	Paul Molefe
30 th	David & Bridget Edwards (W/A)	30 th	Pilane & Vicky Moroa (W/A)

NB: Although we do make an effort to keep our Birthday and Anniversary lists updated,

we would be grateful for your comments regarding errors or omissions.

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General Notices

- **Sunday School Notes:** Sets of these notes can be obtained from Revd Patricia Lane at a cost of R60.00. Invest in your Sunday School – use good teaching material.

- **Emergency Planning in Churches:** St Luke's, Orchards have invited Jenny Clarke to present another two-day course on Saturday, 26th January 2008 and Saturday, 10th May 2008. The closing date for applications for the first part of the course is 18th January 2008; the closing date for applications for the second part of the course is 2nd May 2008.

Both days will start at 09h00 and end by 16h00. The cost of R150.00 per person for the first part of the course covers documentation, light refreshments and certification. Similarly, the R100 per person for the second part covers the same. This is a good opportunity for those clergy who may have missed the two previous courses run by Jenny Clarke. Those who completed the first part of the course on a previous occasion and were not able to get to the second part are welcome to register for this second part. Please contact Revd Allan Williams on 011 728 7015 for further details.

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