

NATAL ANGLICAN NEWS

A NEWSPAPER FOR THE DIOCESE OF NATAL
IPHEPHA LESIFUNDAMBISHOBI SASENATAL

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Tsunami Disaster

Bishop Rubin's Statement

The devastating impact of the Tsunami disaster on the people of South-East Asia and on the families of visitors from abroad, has inevitably led people to once more speculate on God's role in this enormous human tragedy.

There are some who would claim that the earthquake that caused the deadly tsunamis was God's doing and therefore draw the inference that God must have had something against the hundreds of thousands of people who have lost their lives, homes, possessions and livelihoods in this tragedy. Such people would also claim the HIV and AIDS which has caused the premature death of millions of people across the world is also a judgement from God against people who live sexually immoral lives.

The insurance industry has not helped the situation by previously referring to natural disasters as 'acts of God'. We seem to have a fixation with either pinning the blame for all human tragedy on God, or erroneously and libellously interpreting this as God's judgement against certain groups or categories of people. This is often a convenient way for 'religious people' to remain aloof from the pain and suffering of humanity and to stigmatise and categorise people into 'holy' and 'unholy' and to retreat into spiritual ghettos of their own making.

Over and against these erroneous and destructive interpretations of God's action in history, the Bible affirms that God is love and that every good and perfect gift comes from him. Tsunamis and viruses that cause the death of millions of people are anything but 'good and perfect gifts', and what parent would give a destructive gift to their child?

Humanity is the object of God's eternal and compassionate love, and as Christians we believe that this has been demonstrated most convincingly by God entering humanity through the person of Jesus Christ, and sharing in the suffering and pain of our human condition (even to the point of death). Lest we forget, this is what we have just celebrated over Christmas, and it is interesting to note that the tsunamis struck the day after this celebration (almost as a reminder that God has forever identified with the suffering and pain of our human condition, and is with us in the midst of this and every other human tragedy).

How then do we reconcile God's love for humanity with this enormous human tragedy? This becomes a complex theological issue with no simple answers. However, what we do know from the Bible is that as creator and

However, as we have now witnessed, there are deep flaws and unpredictable ways (confirmed by the \$40 billion payout by the to do with our own mismanagement and abuse of the environment self-destruction and greed. This bent is what the Bible calls 'sin' the entire created order. Earthquakes become one of the world in which the relationships between God, humanity and creation are restored.

Christ suffered and died to bring us salvation and to restore our relationship with God, our neighbour and creation. This gives us hope in the midst of calamity and despair, and enables us to respond with love and compassion to the victims of all human tragedies – be it in the form of natural disasters or the destruction of lives in Darfur, the Middle East and elsewhere, caused by man's inhumanity to man.

The international response to the tsunami disaster has been phenomenal and has united people across religions, cultures, and ethnic groups in their efforts to bring humanitarian aid to victims. This is a great sign of hope for us at this critical juncture in human history, and is the response God calls us to in the light of all human tragedy.

May we continue to respond with the same vigour and compassion to the victims of this terrible human tragedy, and all other disasters and calamities in the world, as we eagerly await the coming of God's rule and reign on earth.

So, questions of faith about the nature and role of God in the face of pain and suffering will inevitably arise, and we do not have to avoid them, but struggle with them. After all, our faith is only as strong as the questions we ask, and as God's 'creatures' we will never fully understand the mind of the Creator - not in this life at any rate! +R



"Waiting for help"

BBC Photo

**"Let us not be weary
in well doing"**
– Galatians 6.9

sustainer of life, God made everything good and perfect. fractures causing the earth to writhe and convulse in increasingly insurance industry for natural disasters last year alone). This is partly as agents of free will who seem to have a bent towards and has resulted in the suffering and travail of both humanity, and consequences of creation's convulsions awaiting the birth of a new

Letter from the Bishop...



New Year greetings!

We have all been shocked and numbed by the images of the devastation caused by the Tsunamis which hit South-East Asia the day after Christmas, and I have received a number of queries from concerned parishioners asking how we can respond to this disaster as the Diocese of Natal.

One of the areas badly affected by this disaster is the Province of Tamil Nadu in Southern India which forms part of the Diocese in Madras which is one of our link dioceses. Ten members of the Diocese of Natal (including my wife, Rose) were visiting South India and the Diocese in Madras and have been deeply impacted by the extent of the tragedy they have encountered. I have now had an opportunity to speak to the Right Revd V. Devasahayam, the Bishop in Madras who has visited many of the areas impacted by the tsunamis and is coordinating an urgent relief programme to get food and clothing to the most devastated areas.

He related to me the story of visiting one of the parishes on the Tamil Nadu coast where parishioners were in the church worshipping when the tsunami hit. The church building was filled with water up to neck height, and people survived by climbing onto the altar and pulpit and by hanging from the tresses of the roof. Another village he visited which had over a thousand houses

was completely destroyed and the stress and trauma of survivors is acute. Not only have they lost large numbers of their families, homes, and possessions, but their livelihoods as well as many of the coastal villages depended on fishing for a living. The devastation caused by the tsunami has wrecked their boats and the entire environment which will take many years to be rehabilitated.

In the midst of this great disaster the Church of South India of which the Diocese in Madras is a part have responded with compassion and vigour to coordinate a relief and rehabilitation programme for victims of the tsunami in Tamil Nadu.

A number of appeals have been made from Aid Agencies in response to this disaster but there is a personal appeal from Bishop Deva who has visited Durban, and as the Diocese of Natal we would like to express our solidarity and companionship with our brothers and sisters in South India by supporting this appeal. I am therefore requesting that each parish consider making a contribution to the Tsunami Disaster Fund which we have set up which will be transferred directly to the Diocese in Madras. Cheques should be made payable to the Diocese of Natal Trust Account and a short covering letter attached marked for the attention of Robin Greenwood. Should you wish to make a direct deposit into this account, kindly fax through a copy of the deposit slip to Robin Greenwood on 033 3456335.

Bishop Deva has undertaken to provide us with regular update reports on the use of funds and other information on their relief and rehabilitation work in Tamil Nadu.

Let us use this opportunity of human tragedy and calamity to demonstrate our love and compassion for our brothers and sisters in our companion link diocese, and continue to hold up the survivors and families of the entire region in our prayers.

Despite appearances to the contrary, Christmas is a reminder that God is with us – Emmanuel!

With best wishes for the New Year.

“Lamb of God”

– A sermon preached in St Paul's, Durban,

by Moses Thabethe, on Sunday 16th January

.....Christ as Lamb of God is a familiar title to us. In the Eucharist, at “the breaking of the bread” (the fraction) or at the “fraction anthem,” we proclaim what John the Baptist said in word or song. Our traditional fraction anthem is the *Agnus Dei* – O Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us/grant us peace. How often at Eucharist have I said or sung, “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us,” and finally, “Grant us your peace.”

As I read over the passage from today's Gospel, John 1.29-34) I realized that most of the time I never give much thought to Jesus as the Lamb of God. These words are more than something said or sung. In them we give expression to our deepest understanding of the identity and purpose of Jesus Christ as our Lamb and Lord. By his life of love and sacrifice, we believe and affirm that he is the one who came and continues to come into a broken world to take our sins upon himself.

All of us are familiar with brokenness. Were I to ask each one of you here what your greatest moment of brokenness was, you would, without doubt, recount many a story. Like the missionary call of the servant in Isaiah (Isaiah 49:1-3) and “those called to be saints” in St. Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth (1Corinthians 2:ff), we are informed that God's call is trustworthy and true. Therefore we can believe from the depth of our hearts that our God is a faithful God. And our faithful response to God is to rebuild broken lives, to reconcile people to God's love and justice through Christ Jesus our Lamb and Lord.

Through baptism into the Body of Christ we are empowered and enabled by the Holy

Spirit to build up the oppressed. Through the love of Christ, we are called to improve the broken spirit of all those who have given up hope, those who live like exiles weighed down by the yoke of spiritual, social, economic, and political dislocation. In other words, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ we are called to empower the human spirit with a sense of identity and purpose – an identity and purpose which are only found in our loving God. We are called to connect or re-connect human lives to the ultimate reality, the foundation of all things, which is God who creates and sustains life, a God who is active in the affairs of the world.

The aftermath of the Tsunamis in South East Asia continues to teach us something about God today. In that horrific natural disaster we saw God active in the world, even though he seemed very far away. The tragedy opened our eyes to an aspect of God's encounter with humanity. A God who comes to us with compassion (Latin: *com + pacere*), the word means to *suffer with*. He is therefore, a God who suffers with us. In the midst of pain and suffering God is not an uninterested bystander, he is right there with us in our pain.

Henry Nouwen expresses this beautifully in his book *The Wounded Healer*: when he says that we would not see God as authentic unless his caring came from a “heart wounded with suffering”. He continues to say:

Who can save a child from a burning building without taking the risk of being hurt by the flames? Who can listen to a story of loneliness and despair without the risk of experiencing similar pains of the heart or even losing his precious peace of mind. In short, who can take away suffering without entering it. p.72

There seems to be so much suffering in the world and in our lives that no God could understand us or save us or bring us to wholeness except a suffering God. In the painful event of the Tsunami tragedy, we observe how some people wrongly and abusively used the name of God for religious vendettas and revenge. We hear people, twisted by heartache and disbelief, question God's very existence.

If you have been reading the Mail & Guardian in the past few weeks you would have seen the article by Colin Bower December 24th, calling Christianity a drug, saying that Christianity is illogical.

But in the midst of that pain and disillusion, we also see people come together around the world. We see people from many faith perspectives respond to that urgent crisis with expressions of God's love through prayer, service to others, and by wonderful acts of generosity toward those countries devastated by the Tsunami, caring for the injured, counselling those grieving over the death of loved ones and those displaced by the loss of personal property, and resources. Whatever the road to faith or religious tradition, God was there alive and active. God always shines through genuine acts of love and service to human need.

Our call, according to today's Gospel reading, is to bear witness to Christ, the Lamb of God, to follow him, to testify to his goodness, and to pattern our lives after his. Therefore, if we truly claim Jesus as our loving and liberating Lord, we will stand resolute and not fear the power of sceptics and cynics.

We serve a God who has made many inroads into our world. Therefore let us create

space for God to speak love, truth, justice, mercy and forgiveness through the voices of cultures and faith traditions other than our own and our call for Christian discipleship and witness may well begin to flower and flourish when we ask ourselves the following questions:

*Who first pointed Jesus out to me?

*What nurtured and nourished me in the faith?

*When did I begin to witness for him, to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah, the Lamb of God, and the Lord of my life? *When was the last time I said to someone, I have found Jesus! He has made my life worth living and he will do the same for you if you chose to follow him?

Today's Gospel reminds us that being a disciple of Jesus means that we grow by faith on a daily basis, to become witnesses. That is why we come together every Sunday as a community to worship together. We could easily worship alone with a few members of our families in the comfort of our homes, but we come together “to knit together God's saints” as we touch each other's lives and thus, build the kingdom of God.

And witnessing for Christ is an active, lifetime enterprise – not something passive. One cannot be a disciple of Jesus at a distance any more than one can be a distant lover. To love Christ is to be drawn close to him, and to know Christ is to inspire others to want to know him. To help Christ is to share the Good News about him with others.

Blessed are we when we bring to others the gift of love, peace, justice, tolerance, and mercy. Blessed are we when we do so by becoming witnesses for Christ who is the Lamb of God.....

Archbishop's Reflections on the Tsunami and the Questions People Ask



'Archbishop, where is God in this tragedy?'

I have been asked many times since the earthquake and tsunamis, and my first answer is this.

We have a God who weeps with us, wherever there is suffering and pain. Again and again, the Christian gospel assures us that God is not an absent deity, cold-hearted and distant from our sufferings. Rather, in Jesus Christ fully God and fully human he shares in all the joys and pains of life. More than that, on the cross Jesus shares in mortality and death. His resurrection, rising from the grave on Easter Sunday to a new and fuller life, shows that he has broken the power of death, and so for us who trust in him, death is not the end, not the ultimate enemy who overcomes us all.

These truths are not changed by the tsunami rather, the tsunami shows how deeply we need God's love in life, and God's reassurance that he is indeed greater than death.

The next question that people often ask is, 'If God really is all-loving and all-powerful, surely he would not allow this to happen?'

Philosophers have wrestled with this over the centuries and never reached a satisfactory answer. There is a good reason for this. Faith is not an intellectual exercise reducing God to something our finite minds can grasp, or only being prepared to believe in the sort of God who behaves in ways we can understand. God is too big for us. And faith is about having a living relationship with the God of love who promises to be with us in all circumstances if we are ready to accept

him. This is why Christianity has withstood the tests of time.

Repeatedly, those who face tragedy tell how they were sustained through it by and often, only by God's presence with them, his love, his comfort, his strength, and his encouragement to pick up the pieces and go forward. Many of us know this in our own lives it was my experience both on Robben Island, and later when my first wife died suddenly. When you have experienced him like this, you cannot doubt his love, and his power to transform lives.

Another question I have been asked is whether this is an 'act of God' or just an accident of geology. God has created an awe-inspiring universe, in which our tiny planet, through processes like this earthquake, has produced conditions which sustain life. Indeed, scientists say there was such a tiny possibility of this happening as to be almost beyond coincidence. So it is not helpful to call earthquakes 'acts of God,' unless we say the same of other wonders of nature, from the awesome power of the Niagara Falls, to the marvel of a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis.

There is also a human dimension, if not to the earthquake, then to its consequences. Scientists tell us that the cause of the earthquake was beyond human control. But they have also pointed out that the effects of the tsunami in many areas were worsened because of our destruction of mangroves and climatically

insensitive building developments.

The Bible tells us that we should be responsible stewards of God's creation. In this case it means that we must heed the call by the World Wide Fund for Nature and others, to ensure that reconstruction is ecologically appropriate and sustainable. We must also accept that the consequences of global warming, such as rising sea levels, are our fault, and must act to rectify matters. All of us must bear our responsibilities for this, wherever we live on this planet.

It would be wrong to think that God allowed the earthquake to punish humanity in some sort of simplistic and vindictive way sweeping good and bad together into the sea. But at the same time, we must never forget that each one of us is accountable to him for our actions. We are not puppets God gives us choice in how we live.

It is more helpful to see this as a 'wake-up call' to use our choices wisely especially in how we share the resources of the world. Richer countries have early warning systems; Japan and San Francisco can afford buildings that withstand earthquakes. Poverty, rooted in unjust economic systems, means natural disasters always seem to hit the poorest hardest. It is also a wake-up call to recognise the ultimate realities of life that we cannot understand and control everything, and must rely on God to direct us, and to forgive us when we fail to be the people we ought.

Whenever tragedy strikes whether on a huge scale, like the tsunamis, or in individual lives and families, we must always remember that God never turns his back on us. 'I am with you always, to the end of time' Jesus promised his disciples.

God also shows his love in inspiring countless loving human actions. Alongside the disaster there have been numerous stories of people risking, even forfeiting, their lives to save others; local people, devastated by their own losses, opening their homes to foreigners; and the outpouring of aid from individuals.

'Love your neighbour as yourself' taught Jesus. One lesson of this tragedy is that the whole human family are our neighbours. We each share the responsibility to live generously towards the entire human race, not just those affected by the earthquake.

We must also remember those like the 40 million people on our planet who live with HIV/AIDS, of whom 3 million will die this year. So will another 2 million from TB, and another million from malaria. Both of these are easily curable and we can easily afford it, if we choose to do so.

'In all things God works for good' says a famous Bible verse. My final answer to those who ask these questions would be that the God who overcame death on the cross can and does bring hope and new beginnings even in the darkest tragedy it is up to us to let him touch us.

+Njongonkulu Ndungane

The Editor

I am grateful to you for the overview and excerpts of the Windsor Report in the last issue of Anglican News.

A year ago the Diocese, Province and Communion were in a furore over the issue of same-gender unions and ordinations.

We have waited patiently for the report of the commission convened by Archbishop Eames, and in understanding that its mandate is about maintaining the highest degree of communion within Anglicanism, I would wish to make a few comments about its contribution to the church as a whole.

What is most impressive is the biblical foundation of communion, koinonia, providing the basis of our relationship with each other, with God, within the body of Christ, and within Anglicanism. Also commendable are the sections on the bible and its interpretation.

Where the Report departs from this high level of theology, and appears instead to adopt an approach of ecclesiastical diplomacy is on what it has to say about the decision-making process and about the maintenance of communion.

The ordination of women provides a good example of the decision-making process within the Communion, but it was not pointed out by the Report that the Diocese of Hong Kong became an autonomous province only within the last fifteen years. Prior to that it was an extra-provincial diocese under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

That was why headmaster-style Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher threw out the woman ordained in 1944 and why such a painstaking process was necessary for the successful women priests in 1971. The Report allows us to think the procedure is too straight forward and equitable.

There is an absence of even-handedness in the recommendations made for the maintenance of communion. Both sides of the conflict are invited to regret the consequences of their actions, but only the Episcopal Church (USA) and the New Westminster diocese are charged with not having consulted meaningfully with the Communion or failing to provide an explanation for the actions they had taken.

Those bishops, however, who had intervened in dioceses not their own were not accused of failing to consult. Neither are they invited to withdraw from communion their representative functions, pending their admissions of regret.

The enormity of their actions was further reduced by seeing the bishops as having acted out of conscience, yet the interventions took place in 2000 and 2001, two years before the crisis over same-gender unions and ordinations erupted in August 2003. It is possible that the commission listened to those who shouted the loudest.

The response of the bishops meeting in Lagos, also recorded in the last Anglican News, is indicative of this belligerence, and does not bode well for maintaining a high level of communion.

The Lagos bishops pleaded that they had 'responded to the cries of beleaguered friends. They were certainly being pro-active.

The commission leaves one with the impression that the Anglican Communion has evolved with careful forethought and planning, as if nothing was ever illegal, invalid or uncanonical, let alone contrary to the moral advice of the Lambeth Conference.

Our own Province is better off for having one bishop charged with heresy, and three whose letters patent were null and void. This should be reassuring.

Human endeavour does not always coincide with that of the Holy Spirit, and much of the preventive actions of God have not had our sanction. He did not seek moral advice from Lambeth before he sent his son to be incarnated, and who were those who protested the loudest?

What we still need is a prophetic voice. That also was not within the commission's mandate, and until all sides hear such a voice and respond, communion will remain at the present low level.

Ian Darby



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Anglican News surplus:

If you find your church has copies left over in church please let us know so we can allocate them to other parishes where demand exceeds supply.

Urgency:

It is thanks to you, the readers, that *Anglican News* is becoming so newsworthy. We are already finalizing material for the next issue. Do please send in your news as promptly as possible.

Mission to Seafarers Chairman retires

CAPTAIN Mike Cooper was first introduced to the Durban Branch of the Mission to Seafarers back in the 1980's when he held the post of Port Captain of Durban, and through the years, served on the Durban Management Committee as General Committee member and in more recent years as Chairman.

He resigned from the Durban Branch Committee in July, and was replaced in the chair by Ken Lowes, and on 27th November a farewell party was held in his honour at the home of Peter Cottrell at Winston Park, just north of Durban, when he was showered with gifts and good wishes and his wife Lorraine was presented with two beautiful bouquets of flowers, one being from the Flying Angel Women's Guild.

In response he said how much his work on the Committee had meant to him and judging by his general comments he will definitely be seen around the harbour and at the Bayhead Seafarer's Mission at future events.

He said that he had witnessed many changes in the redevelopment of Durban Harbour and spoke of the pressing need for new container berths.



Mr Ken Lowes the new Chairman and Capt Cooper

Capt Cooper being thanked by Mission to Seafarers Liason Bishop Paddy Glover



Feeding the 5000 Good response

There has been a good reaction to the front page story in the last issue of Anglican News, according to the Rector of St David's, the Revd Ian Darby.

They now have their deep freeze and have received many cash donations to supplement the gifts in kind.

"We specially appreciate the fact that the generous provision of bread comes from Albany's best, and not from any second grade or reject loaves", he said.

Visit of the Bishop of Niassa

BISHOP Mark van Koeving, his wife Helen and their three children, Jake, Matthew and Kylie, recently paid a visit to the Diocese on their return from a holiday in the Cape. Their primary task was to take Jake and Matthew to school at Cowan House where they will be boarders.



While in the Diocese Bishop Mark and Helen met up with a number of folk interested in their Diocese. At a lunch in Durban Bishop Mark and Helen also met up with five clergy and laity from their own Diocese who were travelling down to the College of the Transfiguration where they will spend five weeks.

It is Bishop Rubin's intention to strengthen the link between our two Dioceses with an episcopal visit to Niassa later this year.

The St Thomas' Tsunami Broadcast

— Rob Jobling

IN October last year we were asked to prepare an evening service for broadcast on the 9th January. We did, but the SABC never came back to us. Our e-mails went unanswered and calls to Johannesburg were not returned.

On Monday 3rd January, our first day back at work, SABC Johannesburg phoned in a panic – where was the recording? Apparently SABC Durban was supposed to do the recording, but didn't get round to it. We were then asked – Could we prepare a service for Sunday 9th, and record it on Thursday 6th?

That Monday evening the worship team met at the Rectory and prayed and brain-stormed over the service. At first, remembering that Thursday was Epiphany, we focussed on wise men, gifts etc., but then somebody got the ultimate brain-storm and we were away on the tsunami theme.

The team worked really hard, phoning round the congregation (190 people in church), planning music for the organist, choir and music group; arranging readers, prayers, press releases and inviting the Bishop – it all 'grew like Topsy'!

When we told the congregation that we would be recording a service for the SABC, everyone naturally thought television, and we had to break the news gently that it was radio. As it happened on the night TV News turned up as, according to the SABC, we were the first church in South Africa to have a specifically 'tsunami related' service. A number of the ladies were most indignant as they felt that we could have given them fair warning to get hairdos and suitable garb! We had good news coverage on the Friday morning.

Praise the Lord! It was His service. We handed it all over to Him and He blessed it mightily.

The response was absolutely amazing – R26,000 collected on the night and then another R5,500 over the weekend – it was all given to Bishop Rubin to send to our link diocese of Madras on the east coast of India.

A truly remarkable (and exhausting) week!



Diocese of Natal



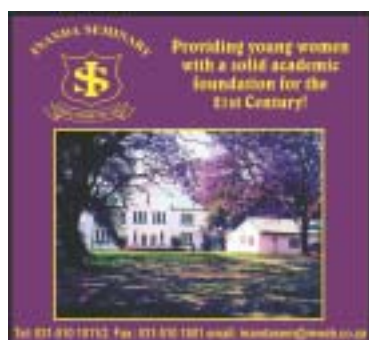
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Ngcwayi Parish What a year it was!

By The Revd Dennis Gama, St Laurence's Ngcwayi

The Parish gave thanks to God for Fr. E. Dano's ministry. He served the Diocese of Natal so well. He was the first rector of St. Mk's Imbali. He is the founder of St. Agnes - Acilima in the Parish of Ngcwayi.

The regional Mothers Union met at St. Laurence – Murchison on Mary Sumner Day. This is an annual event in the life of the region of Umzimkhulu. The mothers Union from Diocese of Swaziland, Umzimvubu and the Diocese of Natal gathered at Protea Park, Port Shepstone, to discuss matters of common interest.

Bishop E. Thwala conducted an official visitation to the parish. He held a confirmation service – in which 24 candidates were confirmed and 10 lay-ministers were admitted.

Not only members of the Diocese of Natal attended the Diocesan Iviyo Gathering. There were also representatives from the Diocese of Swaziland and the Diocese of Umzibubu who came to bless us on the day.

The Blessing of UGU Municipality Manager. Sithembiso Cele. He is the new Mayor of UGU Municipality, a son of the Parish of St. Laurence – Ngcwayi. The parish gave thanks to God for the service of Sithembiso and prayed for his guidance. The service was at St. James Gamalakhe. Archdeacon Margie Wishart was the preacher and the Rev. Dennis Gama conducted the service.

The Parish mourns the death of our beloved Lay-Minister, Bongani Mazibuko, who died on New Years Day 2005. He served on both the Parish Council and the Diocese. May his soul rest in peace.

We gave thanks to God for all the progress achieved by the Parish of Ngcwayi – for the good Parish Administration, the payment of assessment and the insurance. May our loving God continue to help us in the New Year – 2005.



Diocesan Offices

– Change of e-mail addresses

THE Diocese has gone over to a radio link with Telkom as its server and now has its own domain @dionatal.

These are technicalities which mean in practice that there are now new e-mail addresses for the personnel and departments located in the Diocesan offices in Durban and Pietermaritzburg as follows:

+Rubin	bishop@dionatal.org.za
+Funginkosi	bishopmbhele@dionatal.org.za
+Elijah	bishophwala@dionatal.org.za
Fred	dean@dionatal.org.za
Robin	diocese@secretary@dionatal.org.za
Nelly	mothersunion@dionatal.org.za
Rob Taylor	leadership@dionatal.org.za
Thoko	aids@dionatal.org.za
Malindi	youth@dionatal.org.za
Janice	janice@dionatal.org.za
Michelle	michelle@dionatal.org.za
Dawn	dawn@dionatal.org.za
Charlene	charlene@dionatal.org.za
Mary	archives@dionatal.org.za
Mabel	cathedral@dionatal.org.za
Frank	frank@dionatal.org.za

Journalism Courses

QUO VADIS Communications, on behalf of the leading ecumenical magazine, Challenge, is offering Basic Communications Courses designed specially for members of the religious and NGO communities in Southern Africa to meet the urgent need for communicators who report, write, edit and produce print media, and are involved in the media.

Now in their sixth year, these courses, held in Johannesburg, are heavily subsidised ensuring that fees are kept as low as possible, and the R4699 fee includes accommodation and meals for the entire duration of the course.

The dates for the first 2005 course are: 14-16 March, 11-13 April, 9-11 May. For more information, please contact:

Sello Kau (Sello@quo-vadis.co.za) Tel: (011) 487 0026, Fax: (011) 487 1994 Address: P O Box 507, Kengray, 2100.

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Around the Diocese



THE Revd Frankie Thacker, known throughout the Diocese through her role as Bishop's Secretary, has entered the full-time ministry and was instituted as Rector of Richmond in a service conducted by Bishop Funginkosi Mkhize on 23rd January. On the same day the Revd Monica Mkhize was instituted as Rector of Addington, and The Revd Nkosinathi Ndwandwe licensed as Associate Dean in the Cathedral.

To be instituted as Rectors during February are the Reverends Bellina Mangena, (Ezimbokodweni) Bongani Magwaza (Claremont) Simphiwe Ngcobo (Ntuzuma,) John Mzimela (Madadeni) Hlanganisa Siyothula (Sobantu) Howard Phelane (Umzimkhulwana) Cyril Miller (Overport).

In March the Institutions take place of the Reverends John Ayyala (Chatsworth). Jennifer Sistig (Hillcrest) Bonginkosi Mkhize (Imbali), and the Reverends Vincent Dippenaar, Andreas Sistig and Patrick Nene will receive the Bishop's license. In May Rob Taylor will be instituted as Rector of Umhlali.

New Regions

Durban region has been 'multiplied' by the establishment of two distinct areas, Durban (City Parishes), and Durban Ridge, with two new Archdeacons appointed.



They are Fr John Fray and the Revd Ndabenzinhle Sibisi respectively, to replace the present Archdeacon of Durban, The Revd Rod van Zuylen who has been made an Honorary Canon in recognition of his long service on Chapter.

*

We have just heard of the passing of The Revd Edward Eric Ivor Glass who died in Greytown on Monday 24th January.

*

Bishop Rubin is to preside at the Enthronement of the newly elected Bishop of Zululand on February 13.

*

The theme of the Clergy School on 7 and 8 March is "The Bible – Authority, Interpretation and Application"

*

Heads and Chaplains of the Independent Schools are meeting at Cordwalles on 22nd February.

*

There will be a Diocesan Imbiso on rural Development on 4-6th February.

*

Bible Study update: Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and travelled by Camelot. The climate in the Sarah is such that the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

Priests on a Pedestal?

Dear Editor

According to the Anglican News of December 2004, two deacons were 'raised to the priesthood' at the Advent Ordination in the Diocese of Natal.

I have, of course, encountered references to an exalted priesthood before, but have regarded these as a temporary aberration or unfortunate ignorance on the part of the lay or clergy person concerned.

I do not of course attribute the phrase 'raised to the priesthood' to either the ordaining ministers or those ordained at the Advent ordinations. However, as language both reflects and creates reality, the use of this expression in a newspaper for the Diocese of Natal suggests that the idea has some currency in the diocese.

When the ordination of women to the priesthood was being debated, many hoped for a transformed priesthood rather than the politically correct incorporation of women into the existing hierarchy. More than ten years on, talk of deacons being 'raised to the priesthood' does not suggest an ethos and practice of church institutional organisation in which all can find ownership, identity and purpose.

More than this, an elevated priesthood seems sadly at odds with the baby in the manger and the crucified one on the cross, who is surely the example for all priesthood.

Yours sincerely
Mandy Goedhals
314 Clark Road
Glenwood, Durban

Is there perhaps a link between loss of respect for the clergy and our society's moral decline – just as lack of respect for parents and teachers has contributed to juvenile delinquency and lack of respect for women has led to the rise in their being abused. – Ed

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Pilgrimage Tour

ARCHDEACON Colin Peattie will be leading another Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from 4-17 June, visiting both Old Testament Sites (like, Megiddo, Mt. Carmel, Abraham's city of Beersheva, Ein Gedi), as well as most of the sites connected with the life and ministry of Jesus, like Nazareth, Caesarea Philippi, the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Mt of Beatitudes, Mt. of Olives, Via Dolorosa, and the Garden Tomb, where they will celebrate Holy Communion.

Other special places visited will be Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, Joppa where Peter had his vision, Caesarea Maritima where Peter first preached to the Gentiles. There will be opportunity for a swim in the Dead Sea at Masada and a visit to the Red Sea holiday resort of Eilat.

For full details of this PilgrimageTour, which is priced at R12960, contact Colin Peattie at 032 5254004 or by e-mail cpeattie@absamail.co.za.

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Further particulars may be requested from this address or by telephone on (033) 386 6304.

Every application will be dealt with in confidence but will not be held until the applicant is interviewed.

Trophy Winners

RECIPIENTS of the Marianne de Jager Performing Arts Trophy for 2004 were Lindiwe Khanyile and Sihle Mofokeng, both Grade 8 pupils at St Nicholas School.

They were awarded the trophy for being very committed members of the Quiristers, a church choir at the school, the Senior Choir, the Steel Drum Band and the Pietermaritzburg Childrens' Choir.

Presenting the trophy is Dr Oscar Servant who carved the wonderful trophy out of wood depicting a boy and a girl playing the recorder.

Marianne de Jager is the Quirister Tutor who donated the trophy to the school.



Lambeth Conference 2008

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, has announced that the next Lambeth Conference is to be held in Canterbury in the summer of 2008, saying that new times required a new kind of Lambeth Conference.

After considering various options including financial and logistical issues, an international panel of advisers advised that Canterbury would be the most appropriate venue for the conference.

The Lambeth Conference, which draws together Anglican Communion bishops from around the globe, is convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury normally once a decade. The last conference took place in 1998.

The city of Canterbury has been the venue for the last three conferences, but the Conference takes its name from the first meeting, which was convened at Lambeth Palace by Archbishop Longley in 1867.

Mission to Seafarers Membership Drive

THE Durban Branch of the Mission to Seafarers has currently launched a new membership drive for general members and supporters, as well as ladies for the Flying Angel Women's Guild, to join present ranks, especially with the recent redevelopment of the Port of Durban

The Woman's Guild meets on a regular basis at the Bayhead Seafarers Mission and takes part in annual events such as the "Share your Christmas with a Seafarer" project whereby every seafarer calling at Durban around Christmas Day receives a small gift.

Membership forms for the Mission and the Woman's Guild may be obtained by contacting the Secretary, Aurora Marais, at telephone 031 - 201 0097 or at P.O. Box 59180, Umbilo. 4075.

The new Durban Branch Chairman, Ken Lowes is well known in Durban shipping circles and looks forward to a new era of missionary work and a bright future for the Durban branch.

Local Flood Damage Appeal for Donations

THE Diocese of Natal has established a Crisis Fund to assist those affected by the severe storms that recently lashed certain areas of KZN such as Greytown and Underberg.

An amount of R 10 000 has already been collected for this fund and the Bishop would like to encourage all parishes to contribute to it.

"I am grateful to all the parishes who have responded to my appeal to assist those affected by the Tsunami disaster in South-East Asia, but we must not forget our brothers and sisters closer to home who have also incurred serious losses as a result of devastating storms."

Donations by cheque should be made payable to the Diocese of Natal Trust Account, **clearly indicating that this is for the Midlands Crisis Fund.** Please do not deposit donations directly into this account as it will not be possible to distinguish them from gifts intended for the Tsunami Disaster Fund. Written acknowledgement of all donations will be made in due course.



Africa must set its agenda, says Archbishop

AFRICA must set its own agenda, which should be relevant to the prevailing circumstances, according to the Archbishop of Cape Town, the Most Revd Njongonkulu Ndungane.

"I believe the Christian message and faith is powerful to confront issues affecting Africa and we must focus on serving our fellow men and women instead of dwelling on issues that are really not pertinent to us" he said.

He gave the example of the ongoing Sudan peace process saying the Church in Africa must take an active role in strengthening the process.

The Archbishop also singled out HIV/AIDS and debt relief as issues that the church should push aggressively disclosing that in 2000 he was among top leaders who petitioned the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Gordon Brown, on debt relief and was happy that strong consideration was now being given to debt cancellation.

He made these remarks when he met the General Secretary of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), the Revd Canon John Kanyikwa, in Nairobi, en route to Somalia to hand over his church's donation of \$75,000 to people affected by the December 26 Tsunami in Somalia. He also held talks with the Somali President Abdullahi Ahmed in Nairobi.

He is to view the damage in Somalia for himself and donate part of the money to disaster relief there, where the fishing industry – vital to the livelihood of many Somalis – has been badly affected. The money will be disbursed through the All Africa Council of Churches, as there is no Anglican infrastructure in that country.

The rest of the amount raised will be divided between churches in other countries affected, including the Anglican Church of North India, whose diocese of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands lost eight priests, many parishioners and a number of church buildings in the disaster.

The Archbishop said he had been moved by the plight of those affected by the Tsunami in Somalia even as the world focused on Asia which was worst hit by the killer wave. Over 300 people are reported killed in Somalia and hundreds of others left homeless and without basic necessities.

He expressed hope that interfaith dialogue would be enhanced in Africa adding that a good starting point would be to come to the aid of those suffering regardless of their faith.

.....

A college professor who was an avowed atheist shocked several of his students when he flatly stated during his lecture that there is no God, and to prove his point, he looked up at the ceiling and shouted "God, if you are real, then I challenge you to knock me off this Platform. I'll give you 15 minutes!"

The lecture room fell silent, and you could have heard a pin drop as ten minutes went by and he again taunted God, saying, "Here I am, God. I'm still waiting."

His countdown got down to the last couple of minutes when a young student walked up to the professor, punched full in the face, and sent him reeling back over teacups from his lofty platform. The professor was out cold, and the young man calmly took a seat in the front row.

As he came to and got up from the floor, the professor yelled at him, "What's the matter with you? Why did you do that?"

"God was busy", he replied, "He sent me."

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