

Chairperson's Report

Our AGM is on par as the Church celebrates the call to the Month of Compassion. Compassion is a key ingredient of the ministry of Social Development, because it is inclusively about the People of God their wholistic progress.

The work of SocDev is high on the agenda of Bishop Margaret, regularly spoken about at Diocesan Chapter, integrated into the Parishes through the Archdeaconry and admirably carried out by the staff.

This is the work of the kingdom of God, celebrating the Incarnate God, present to the world and more especially to the marginalised, poverty-stricken, disenfranchised and disempowered. The Incarnate God is in the face of the powerful and wealthy

The staff are hands-on, knowledgeable, creative and inclusive. It's a small staff component with big hearts and imaginative minds. It is my great privilege to have worked alongside them and to be energised, educated and enthused by their commitment to God and God's Church.

There is an attempt to support them through the Board members made up of Archdeaconry representatives. There continues to be a hiatus in the functioning of the Board because of availability and commitment. On the Board those who are committed are highly-skilled and have a sincere passion for this work. We need to grow them, encourage them and add to their number.

One of the important tasks are to finalise the Constitution in such a manner that it connects to the ACTS of the Diocese, to the Country's Policy on Non-Profit Organisations, to the Office of the Bishop and celebrates the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. This is being prepared for submission and acceptance at the Diocesan Standing Committee in November, 2019. We are thankful to Ms. Bettina Wyngaard for ably assisting in this regard.

The work of SocDev encompasses a range of social challenges. They are called to serve on our behalf at the root of these challenges. They do so in an empowering manner deeply conscious of not victimising the victim through disempowerment, but rather to be a serving presence. The elderly as well as children are enriched by their work.

There is no doubt that a more proactive embrace their mission through Archdeaconry and Parish support will further put our Diocese on the map of assisting to build and develop God's people in every community. Our structures need to partner them more visible especially in this time of economic downturn.

SocDev have developed creative partnerships which assists collective address of grassroots advance. These efforts have ensured that basic daily needs are attended to. Collaboration is vital to effectively address growing social challenges in a time when government is lacking in service delivery and the Church, citizens and the private sector need to step-up to save our people. Hopefully this will encourage politicians and government departments to move from politicking to building the nation on all levels.

I express my gratitude to Bishop Margaret and my colleagues for permitting me to share in the ministry of SocDev. My family and parish equally have been understanding and supportive. I deeply appreciate them.

I am deeply grateful for the honour of working with Mrs Charmaine Liddle and her staff. They are indeed credible assets to our Diocese. We celebrate them in the words of Jesus – 'I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.' (Matt 25:35-36)

God bless the future and growth of this department, a vital extension of the Diocese's contextual mission and ministry. I pray that the Diocese will more fully support and embrace them.

Be assured of my prayers and support.

Rodney Whiteman

August, 2019