

## LOCKDOWN DAY 55 – 20 MAY 2020

Molweni family of False Bay Diocese and our many friends,

Scripture: John 10:11-18    Hymn: Alleluia! *Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise*

The **call** has come for our Grade 7 and 12 learners to return to school on 1 June. Some will hear this ‘*Call to Return*’ as the call that is made to us on Ash Wednesday when hope is kindled in our hearts to come back to our Lord, our Good Shepherd. Maybe a sense of hope is kindled in their hearts by the possibility of getting back to classes. For all of us, we come back to the Holy One to strengthen our faith. *“Hearts to heaven and voices raise: Shed upon us heavenly grace.”*

Going back to school is **not** going back to **normal**. Economies globally will keep bleeding. We have faith in God and are patiently praying and waiting for miracles in 2020. Fear still reigns and we cannot guarantee the safety of anyone. We pray for our cleaners disinfecting schools, getting them ready for re-opening. Our Government is doing the best they can. We are making progress. Hope is very much alive. We all need to do whatever we can to help our neighbours, help each other and support our government.

Every child, every learner is a gift of God. Every parent, every educator, every clergy person, has a spiritual responsibility to **provide** the children in their care with an atmosphere conducive to their growth in wisdom and grace. The essential clothing for every Christian is love. Spouses and partners, please be tender towards the one you love, who is an educator. Love in the family is sharing of life together, especially now when the **call to return to school** has come. Families with children in Grades 7 and 12 are called to show a deep respect, concern and solicitude for each other, understanding for one another and readiness to help one another, appreciation and support for one another. Parents and caregivers should help their children, by word and example, to cultivate the spirit and attitude suitable for home, school and family. They should believe in their children, nurture them, protect them, give them guidance, confidence and hope. In the same way children should relate to their parents and caregivers with love, respect, trust, understanding, obedience, humility, and kindness.

As has been said before, we are not in the **same boat** but we are in the **same storm**. For some in rural areas and certain townships, going back to school is a desperate crisis. Water and sanitation in some areas is still a work-in-progress. Our perceptions and needs are completely different.

Being a **vessel of love** requires of us to act for another’s good; to do what brings benefit to the other. We see dreams dashed; we see hopes die. We also see dreams come true; we see hopes come alive. We start over again – with schooling, work and prayer. We approach these transitions with the eyes of faith. The journey inside, inwards always has the aura of mystery and challenge.

Today we unite with our educators and learners who need shepherding. Some respond to the **call to return to school** like a call to return to a **bleak valley**; for others it is returning to **green pastures**. We pray to the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for his sheep, that parents and educators who are shepherding their children, will not stumble and fall. Educators and parents, we recognise your gifts of pastoral care that you bring to your flock of learners; care that springs from your faith in a loving, caring God.

Please reach out today to any school principal who you know, to any grade 7 or 12 learner, to domestic staff workers in our schools.

Today we **pray together** for our nation’s schools, learners, parents, educators and in particular, for principals. We pray for security and safety in schools. **Lock-down** brings fresh emotions and realistic worries. We pray against bullying and child trafficking. We pray that social distancing will not detract from learning. We thank God for the **focus** of our Educators. We pray for a positive influence of our children’s friends. God bless all the shepherds fighting back their own fears to risk their lives for our children. We pray that God will quicken the hearts and minds of those in authority to make wise decisions. May we always light the path for our children. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

I am, Because we Are, Because God is....Opening hearts to heal God’s world. *Maranatha! Come save us, Lord Jesus!*