

DIOCESE OF FALSE BAY \* IDAYOSISI YASE FALSE BAY \*  
BISDOM VAN VALSBAAI



The Rt. Reverend Margaret B. Vertue  
Bishop of False Bay

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**STATEMENT FROM EXTENDED CHAPTER  
OF THE DIOCESE OF FALSE BAY**  
14 – 17 March 2022

Grace and Peace be with you!

The Chapter of the Diocese of False Bay met, prayed, discussed, and shared together in its recent Session of Extended Chapter under the leadership of Bishop Margaret Vertue – Bishop of False Bay. We met at Christian Brothers Centre Stellenbosch from the 14 to 17 March 2022.

At the Opening Service Bishop Margaret lit a memorial candle in remembrance of Bishop Merwyn Castle [first Bishop of False Bay], Venerable Trevor Steyn [Archdeacon to the Ordinary], Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu and in loving memory of all our Clergy colleagues who died since the last Extended Chapter Meeting.

The Bishop warmly welcomed the three Canons Designate – Reverends Colleen Daniels, Francois Lewis and Gradwell Fredericks. They will be licensed at the Chrism Service on Maundy Thursday.

Special prayers were offered for the Venerable Rodney Whiteman [Archdeacon of Blue Downs] who was absent due to recent surgery.

This four day meeting of Chapter was punctuated by daily Eucharist, Midday Prayers and the office of Evening Prayer.

**MINISTRY IN A TIME OF COVID:**

Chapter spent time grappling with critical theological and liturgical questions that have arisen as a result of finding ourselves as Ministers at a time of a pandemic. The pandemic brought with it new restrictions on ways of ministering and new challenges on how to be Church.

We realise that although we likely moving towards a post pandemic era, Covid19 is going to be with us for a long while still. Parishes are advised to be vigilant about

observing the protocols set by Government and adhere to the guidelines put forward by the ACSA Covid19 Task Team. The following things were resolved:

#### **BAPTISM:**

As the Priest is the principal Presider at all sacraments, it is therefore the responsibility of the Priest to administer the water and holy oil, while a parent or sponsor hold's the child.

#### **MARRIAGE:**

The Priest must ensure that either the couple is vaccinated or they present Covid19 negative test results not older than 48 hours before the Priest presides at their marriage.

Any Cleric residing in the Diocese of False Bay who is asked to solemnize a Marriage in a Church or non-Church venue located in a different Anglican Diocese must secure the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese where the Marriage will take place as well as the permission of the Bishop of False Bay.

#### **PALM SUNDAY:**

As the President of the Republic of South Africa has extended the state of national disaster for one more month, churches are advised not to have processions on the streets this year. Instead the altar party may process inside the Church.

Parishes are permitted have a silent memorial moment of observance after the Service – folks standing quietly in prayer and vigil in or outside the church fence/wall. All screening and other Covid19 protocols must be strictly observed.

#### **MAUNDY THURSDAY:**

The Liturgy of the Washing of Feet may take place under strict Covid19 protocols. A different basin and towel must be provided for each person whose feet will be washed.

The foot-washing must take the form of pouring water over the feet, with no kissing of the feet.

#### **THE LAYING ON OF HANDS:**

No physical laying on with bare hands should take place for the foreseeable future. Those who feel the need to Anoint someone with holy oils or Lay Hands on a person must let their hands hover over the person. Anointing with oil must be done using a biodegradable ear-bud or cotton wool.

#### **GOOD FRIDAY:**

The Good Friday Liturgy should be restricted to one and a half hours in duration instead of the traditional 3 hours.

## **MINISTERS, COVID19 & VACCINATION:**

Extended Chapter spent a long time discussing the implications of the Motion passed at the last Provincial Synod that all licensed ACSA Clergy must be vaccinated.

Extended Chapter re-iterated the understanding that if a Cleric has medical reasons not to vaccinate they should apply to the Bishop with proof of medical condition that exempts him/her from vaccination. The Bishop will then consult with ACSA, given that the resolution is a Provincial Synod one.

Clergy who test positive for Covid19 are required to follow the Government's prescribed isolation period. In cases where Clergy who test positive need more than the prescribed time to isolate, they need to provide Bishop Margaret with a doctor's certificate.

Furthermore, Clergy whose family members test positive should apply for normal leave should they wish to be home with the family.

## **CHURCH GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION:**

Chapter engaged with the financial devastation of Covid19 and its impact on a Parish's ability to afford Clergy allowances and assessments. We expressed our support for the two Sub-Committees of Diocesan Finance board who are meeting with Church Wardens in order to deal with parish debts and Clergy allowances respectively.

Furthermore, Chapter resolved that that spouses, siblings and children of Clergy should not make themselves available for election of the offices of Warden and Parish Councillors. They should also not be employed at the Parish at which the Clergy person is serving. It is hoped that this matter will be tabled as a Motion at the coming Diocesan Standing Committee and ultimately to Diocesan Synod with the intention to enact it as part of the Acts of the Diocese.

Chapter resolved that Parish Council should interview any Candidate who desires to offer her/himself for ordination, after interviews with the Rector/Priest-in-Charge have taken place. [This guide will be included in the next edition of the Diocesan Workbook for Theological Education and Ministerial Formation.]

Chapter received comprehensive Reports from Archdeacons on the general welfare, highlights, challenges and concerns in each Archdeaconry.

Chapter listened to a brilliant presentation by Ven. Richard on a Media Strategy for the Diocese. The following things were resolved:

- \* Consolidation of the four main media platforms of the Diocese (Anchor, Webpage, Facebook and Livestream) and the branding of these platforms to give them a common identity.
- \* The establishment of a Diocesan Media Team with four Interim Co-ordinators - each Co-ordinator editing a media platform with their respective teams.
- \* The Diocesan Media Team will facilitate the drawing of the media code for the Diocese.
- \* There should be at least one person responsible for Live-streaming Diocesan Services and events in each Archdeaconry.

Ven. Richard was tasked to lead the Media strategies which should include the services of a Media Officer.

Chapter resolved to allow the Hiring out of our Parish Halls with strict adherence to Covid19 protocols, restricted number of persons attending an event. A Compliance Officer from the Parish Protocol Team must be present at an event in the Church Hall.

### **MISSION AND SOCIAL OUTREACH: Monitoring of Diocesan Synod resolutions...**

Chapter received presentations from people who were tasked with the implementation of Diocesan Synod Commissions.

Revd Marlon Porter: Chair of Diocesan Commission on High Youth Unemployment

Revd Nitano Muller: Diocesan Youth Chaplain on issues facing young people,

Revd Oswald Cloete: Chair of the Diocesan Commission on gangsterism, drugs, violence, corruption and exploitation.

Revd Francois Lewis: Chair of the Diocesan Health and Wellness Committee and the Diocesan Covid19 Vaccination Task Team.

Canon Delmaine Petersen: Co-ordinator of the Child Protection Policy formulation.

### **Young People and Children's issues:**

Chapter commended the work that has been done in the creation of a Diocesan Child Protection Policy and urges all Clergy to ensure that:

- \* Each Parish appoints a Child Protection Officer who should be carefully screened before such an appointment is ratified.
- \* All Parishes should send at least two or more persons to the training on Child Protection Policy to take place at St. Joseph Maccassar on the 2 April 2022.

- \* We also encourage every Parish to display the Children's Charter visibly at all Worship centres [Children's Charter posters are available from the SocDev]
- \* We further resolved that all leaders of the Church including Parish Councillors, Wardens, Lay Ministers as well Sunday School, Bible Study and Confirmation Instructors should study and sign the Safe Church Declaration together with the current Diocesan Code of Conduct.

Furthermore, we resolved that there is a need for editing the Diocesan Confirmation Manual to include contextual Life Skill themes and a need to carefully assess who is teaching Confirmation and whether those persons are equipped to also deal with contextual life skills.

### **INAUGURATION OF A CATHEDRAL AND INSTALLATION OF THE DEAN:**

Chapter confirmed that the Parish of All Saints in Somerset West will be inaugurated as the Cathedral of the Diocese of False Bay on the Feast Day of Pentecost: 5 June 2022 at 15h00.

### **CLERGY MATTERS:**

Chapter identified an urgent need to revive the mentorship program for new Rectors as well as a need to do more to prepare our Clergy for retirement.

Both these will be done in accordance with the Guidelines outlined in the Workbook on Theological Education and Ministerial Formation. A day consultation will be had with Clergy retiring in the next four years.

Chapter discussed general liturgical matters:

- \* Quirky behaviour of some Clergy *iro* liturgical practices and how those persons may be helped to rectify such practices.
- \* Our relationship as Marriage Officers with Home Affairs.

An emphasis was made on the importance of always keeping things simple as "less is more" pertaining to liturgical matters.

A team from Chapter was mandated to organize a Diocesan Clergy School in May to deal with liturgical matters and Marriage problems with the national Department of Home Affairs.

### **RE-IMAGINING CHURCH:**

Chapter also had a discussion about ways of re-imagining and re-modelling Church with regards to clergy placements, clergy retirements, stipendiary, non-stipendiary and ministerial grants.

Chapter would like to encourage Clergy to utilise the services of ICAS [Independent Counselling and Advisory Services] an emotional wellness, debriefing and trauma counselling services available for all Clergy, their spouses and children.

We further resolved that the Health and Wellness Committee will also take responsibility of consulting with Clergy approaching retirement about financial wellness.

*"I am, because we are, because God is.  
Embracing a world shattered by the Covid19 pandemic..."*