



**FROM THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN**  
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**Re: Pastoral Letter to the Diocesan Family of Natal**

*Dear People of God,*

Greetings to each of you in the name of our Lord.

I began this *Ad Laos* on the feast day of St Barnabas, who in Acts 4 is called “Son of Encouragement”, in order to encourage you as you discern the way forward for the Diocese. I also wanted to follow up on my Pentecost Pastoral Letter inviting you “to be courageous, to trust God” and to examine the relevance of your structures for today with a view to moving the Diocese from maintenance to mission.

Since that letter, Chapter has prayerfully reflected on the challenge and has expressed its mind. Last week I had an enriching encounter with the Diocesan Trustees, during which I presented to them the request to consider multiplying the Diocese. The invitation was issued in humility, acknowledging the wrestlings of the past and the uncertainties of the present, including Covid-19, but asking them to have faith in the Lord of the Church in taking this step.

After robust and thoughtful responses, the Trustees unanimously agreed in principle to the multiplication of the Diocese of Natal. They also agreed that the Archbishop as Diocesan should begin the process set out in Canon 21. This entails presenting the case to Synod of Bishops in September 2021, and consulting Provincial Synod thereafter. Following these consultations, a Provincial Task Team will begin a further process of consultation and evaluation of the feasibility of such a development.

The good news is that the Trustees recalled that the exercise has been done in the past, that there are records of its work and that we can revive a Diocesan “multiplication team” to work with the Diocese and Province. We experienced some anxiety, but also excitement and a sense that this is a Kairos moment in which we can trust God to carry us forward.

Please pray on the matter, engage others and share your thoughts with me or the Diocesan Secretary as we commit to this act of faith. When you read this, the Dean (acting as Vicar-General) will be on well-deserved leave for a month. I am so grateful for the leadership, friendship and love of this church which he provides, at times to the point of forgetting to take a break. Enjoy your break, Vicar-General!

In the meantime, I have appointed Canon Bellina Mangena as Acting Vicar-General. Please pray and support her as she leads the Diocese from the North over this time.

Please also take special care of yourselves during this third wave of Covid-19. In our Province of Southern Africa, we have lost many parishioners and clergy, as well as the Bishop of Swaziland.

Lastly, I have summoned the Bishops of the Province to gather virtually on 9th July 2021 for an Elective Assembly of the Diocese of Natal. Please pray that we may discern well and that God will send us a faithful servant even in the midst of the multiplication of this huge and precious diocese.

Do not fear: over the past 31 years, the Anglican Church of Southern Africa has created six new dioceses, and we are about to birth a new Province in the form of the *Igreja Anglicana de Moçambique e Angola* (IAMA)!

Please stay safe during this third wave of the coronavirus in our country. Sanitize regularly, keep social distance and wear your masks.

Let us renew, reimagine and rebuild!

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mabo Cape Zone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA