



Holy Trinity Anglican Church

Hillcrest

The Lockdown Chronicle

July 2021

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ

I greet you in the name of our living God, risen Christ. I write to you at a time when areas within our country is literally on fire. When it first began it was happening so far from where we reside. Today it has come into the bowel of our village. Never have I thought that we would see such chaos and anarchy in this place we call our home. As a teen I experienced a similar situation of destruction when scholars expressed their anger at the unjust apartheid government. Today I heard gunshots ringing through the air, and the foul smell of tyres burning in the street, and young men running down the road with either hands full or trolleys full of stolen items from the nearby shopping centres. I am sitting in my office all alone because my fellow workers have been prevented from coming to do their work today.

Like you are doing, I have been giving considerable thought to why this. Initially we were told that it is a reaction to the former President's imprisonment. Like most sensible people I did not think much of the then threat of protest because his imprisonment was not a *coup d'etat* or actions of civil unrest or a political take-over. It was a legal matter instituted by the Highest Court of the Land. It was a legitimate action for a simple reason that the former president contravened the law of the country. But this action has now catapulted into a nationwide campaign of looting, destruction, intimidation maiming and death. To call it what it is, it is deeds of lawlessness, crime, evil, sinfulness, injustice. It is not serving the greater good of this nation and its people. These scenes are also causing fear and uncertainty, poverty and unemployment, intimidation and bullying. It is presenting itself as powerful and fearful, evil masquerading as unconquerable. The Bible teaches us that evil is not invincible. Easter reminds us that death, the instrument of evil, perpetuated by people who disagreed with Jesus, the Christ, was a sign of good overcoming evil. The restoration of life over death. St Paul encourages Timothy with these words, *"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control."* (2 Timothy 1: 6-7) Good, holiness, righteousness and justice is far greater than evil. Evil can be conquered but holiness, and righteousness and justice prevail in all circumstances.

We are living in difficult times, and it appears as if we are being attacked on every side. Since the beginning of 2020 we had to deal with the threats of the deadly infectious disease with which the world continues to struggle. This virus continues to run havoc and cause all kinds of unanticipated problems that affects our lifestyle: family life, financial security, health, social interaction, travel and the like. Now this current strife is adding to an already heavy burden we are forced to carry.

The question that we have to content with is, How does a Christians to respond this social evil? I want to suggest that instead of getting angry and wanting to retaliate we:

- pray and remain vigilant and seek God's peace so that our troubled world may not disrupt our lives with fear of the evil.
- petition God for the State President and Parliament to act courageously, decisively and wise
- avoid getting embroiled in sowing the seeds of discourse and misinformation.
- Do not exploit the fears of others.
- life with hope because God has blessed us with the spirit of "power, love and self-control."
- exercise caution when we need to move around.

- avoid generalising and painting others with the same brush. This is being perpetuated by a small band of young people and not a whole ethnic group. From what we see of the looting, crime, destruction this action seems to have more to do with the young people's physical needs than it has to do political loyalty.

The Newly Elected Diocesan

After our failed attempts at electing a Diocesan Bishop in May the Synod of Bishops met on Friday, 9 July to elect the Bishop of Natal. Thank you for all your prayers. Bishop Nkosinathi Ndwandwe has become the newly elected Bishop of our Diocese. Many of us know him as the Bishop Suffragan who served with Bishop Rubin before he was elected to serve the Diocese of Mthatha. Bishop Ndwandwe knows this diocese, its clergy and people. He also knows many of us because he had often ministered to us. He has done marvellous work in the Diocese of Mthatha and was recognised for his hard work and diligence as a Bishop. It is going to be a great sadness for that Diocese. We are grateful that he will be able to return to us. Please pray for him, his wife and family as they prepare for his move and translation to this Diocese.

Worship

With Lockdown 4 in-person worship is suspended. As from Sunday we will be screening a weekly worship service. It will take various forms and not be the kind of worship we are accustomed too. We want to encourage you, if you have a Smartphone or access to Internet to download the FaceBook App. Once you've done that you can become a Friend of the Parish of Holy Trinity, Hillcrest. As a friend you will be reminded of the services when they begin. If the times are unsuitable you can watch it at your convenience by clicking on the Parish Page and going to video. Chose the Sunday and then sit down and relax.

Gary's Leave

Finally, to report that I had a partially relaxing time while away on leave as well as exposure to the operations of the judicial system. (I was not arrested) I spent two days relaxing along the coast at the start of my leave. I did not do what I planned to do due to the rainy weather but thoroughly enjoyed doing nothing. I then had to deal with matters pertaining to my late mother's affairs. That took me to the High Courts in Johannesburg, Pietermaritzburg and Durban. All I needed was a letter of Authority which I eventually got after three weeks after I started the process. The wheels of justice grind slowly and inconsiderately. If you are poor the scales of Lady Justice are not always balanced in your favour. It ended with me spending another two days away. This time at Bushman's Nek. My first visit and it was amazing and spiritually renewing just to behold the wonder of God's creation. My thanks to all of you, Claudette, Jenipher and the Churchwardens for their oversight and to the Revds Sizwe and Seipati for the spiritual feeding through their thoughtful sermons.

So keep safe from the infections and remain steadfast in faith.

With my love and prayers,

Your priest and friend

Fr Gary