iindaba

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The Bishop writes ...

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we gather once again to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, I want to extend my warmest and most heartfelt Christmas greetings to each and every one of you. This holy season is a time of joy, reflection, and deep spiritual significance.

Christmas is a time when we remember the extraordinary gift that God gave to the world in the form of a tiny, vulnerable baby born in a humble stable. This gift, the gift of His only Son, is a reminder of God's immense love and His profound desire to be in relationship with each one of us.

In a world that can often seem dark and troubled, the message of Christmas shines as a beacon of hope. The birth of Jesus reminds us that even in the most challenging of circumstances, God's light can break through, bringing peace and salvation to all who seek it. It is a time to remember the message of the angels: ***"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men."***

In a busy city, there was a park where people often rushed through on their way to work. It was a place full of strangers, each lost in their own world. However, every Christmas, something remarkable happened.

One morning, a young boy set up a small, do-it-yourself stand at the park's entrance. He had a sign that read, "Free Hugs - Merry Christmas!" At first, passersby hesitated, but the boy's genuine smile was infectious. Slowly, people began to approach him, and soon, the park was filled with the warmth of hugs and smiles.

Strangers embraced one another, sharing a moment of connection amid their busy lives. In those brief encounters, they felt the true spirit of Christmas – the joy of giving, the warmth of human connection, and the reminder that, even in a bustling world, a simple act of kindness can bring people together.

This little boy and his free hugs stand showed that the significance of Christmas lies in the love and goodwill we extend to one another, breaking down the barriers that often separate us and bringing us closer as a global family.

This Christmas, let us not forget those who are less fortunate, who may be experiencing hardship or loneliness. Let us reach out to them with open hearts and open hands, just as God reached out to us with the gift of His Son. Let our love and compassion be a testament to the love that God has shown us.

As a diocesan family, let us also take this opportunity to thank God for the many blessings and graces He has bestowed upon us throughout the year. Our faith community is a source of strength, support, and encouragement, and I am truly grateful for the love and commitment that each of you brings to our Diocese.

May the joy of Christ's birth fill your hearts and homes with love and may the light of His presence guide your steps in the coming year. Let us go forth from this Christmas season with renewed faith, hope, and love, sharing the Good News with all we meet.

I wish you and your loved ones a very blessed Christmas. May the peace and joy of this time be with you - always.

+Edward Port Elizabeth

A time to remember God's extraordinary gift



With Bishop Eddie at the St Francis Xavier Centenary Gala Banquet were Piet Nell, Sidney Ting Chong, Lynette and Brian Axcell (the Rector of St Francis Xavier), Nicky Daniels and the Dean, Sharon Nell.

Christmas 2023



As we celebrate the birth of our Lord we pray for life:

O God our loving Creator, all life is in your hands from the moment of conception until death.

Help us to cherish our children and be grateful for the privilege of sharing in your creation.

Bless all those who defend the rights of the unborn, the poor, the handicapped and the aged.

Enlighten and be merciful toward those who do not value the gift of life. Help them to seek and find you.

Grant that by our care and respect for all people, we may be a sign of your love in the world today.

This we ask in Jesus' name and to His glory. Amen

The editor, together with
Bishop Eddie and Nicky,
the media committee
and Diocesan staff,
wish all our readers
a very blessed
and joyful celebration
of the birth of
Yeshua HaMashiach.
May 2024 bring His shalom,
and a spreading of His love
to whomever you touch
and
wherever you go.

Energized by clergy retreat

Sharon Nell



The Diocesan clergy enjoying a break while on a retreat.

All the stipendiary and a few self-supporting clergy converged on The Willows resort for their annual retreat.

With the theme "A New Vision" they joined together in groups discussing and dissecting the Diocesan vision statement, proposed prayers of human dignity and also studied the Church of Acts 2. Energized and enthused by the fellowship with colleagues, the clergy were somewhat sad to leave the retreat and look forward to the 2024 retreat, where it is hoped more self-supporting clergy will be able to join.



Join

SA Belongs to Jesus

on Telegram

and pray for SA for two minutes three times a day.

Begin praying for the 2024 elections -

that God will put upon the heart of every Christian to vote!

That they will vote for good, God-fearing people who will rule with justice and integrity.



God bless Africa
Protect her children
Transform her leaders
Heal her communities
Restore her dignity
And give her peace
For Jesus Christ's sake.
Amen

St Francis Xavier celebrates 100 years of community ministry



Enjoying the delicious soup served at St Francis Xavier Centenary Banquet were the Diocesan Treasurer-Secretary, Yolande Wolmerans with her husband Gerald; former Rectors, Richard and Hazel Goodfellow; table host Larry Pow Chong; and former Rector Charles Church with his wife Cheryl.

A delicious nine course Chinese meal, wonderful entertainment and, of course, speeches, made the Saturday night 4 November Centenary Gala Banquet celebration an event to remember.

The Loyson Memorial Hall at St Francis Xavier was full to capacity, with over 200 members of the congregation, the community and special guests beautifully dressed to celebrate St Francis Xavier's centenary. Present were four members of the congregation who are over 90 years old.

Master of Ceremonies, Francois Scholtz kept everyone laughing with his introductions of the various speakers and singers. First up was Deon Ah Sing, who gave a brief overview of the history of St Francis Xavier Church. He spoke of the early years saying, "It all began when humble nuns of the Community of Resurrection had a heart for the Chinese people in Central. Sisters Eunice CR and Mary Jean CR, began teaching the children of the Chinese community living in Central and holding worship services for them.

With the growth of numbers it was felt that a church building was needed and the first one was built in Brassel Street. However, in the 1960s the apartheid government moved the Chinese community to Morningside and a new building was needed and so the present one was erected.

Larry Pow Chong spoke about the building of the Gordon Loyson Memorial Hall, saying that when the foundations had been completed just over ten years ago Mark Derry, who was Rector at the time, organised an hour long prayer walk around them. During this time each person spent some time writing scripture verses on the foundation. In this way, the building is resting on scripture. With some financial help from the EP Chinese Association, and much help from the local community giving their time, talents and materials at cost, the building was completed in October 2013, and was debt free.



Bishop Eddie presenting Eddie Jackson with a certificate of appreciation as the eldest surviving churchwarden.

Entertainment included the Parish Chinese choir (who sang Amazing Grace in Mandarin), an isiXhosa choir, some solo songs by Mannie Plaatjies, and the worship group Jesus in Music (JIM) led by Sidney Ting Chong, who also sang a beautiful solo.

Many of the past rectors and assisting priests were present, and Mark Derry, with Debbie, sent a video message; and Elroy Damons sent an e-mail message.

The view from pulpit and pew

❖ *iindaba* asks for prayers for Felicity Edelson as she recovers from surgery. Her husband is Assistant priest at St Cuthbert's in Westbourne Road.

❖ *iindaba* is sad to report on the passing of clergy widow, Molly Stansbury. May her family know the peace of Jesus surrounding them as they mourn.

Clergy on the move

Xhanti Mhlontlo has been appointed Rector of St Stephen's in New Brighton;
- and Andrew White has been appointed Rector of All Saints', Kabega Park.
Both appointments from 1 January 2024.

Think about this!

The average attention span is only 8 to 10 minutes.

According to Judah Schiller of Treetop Therapy, the average audience attention span is only 8 to 10 minutes, which means you should keep your speeches short and engaging to hold your audience's attention.

An individual's attention span varies depending on their age, with younger people usually having longer attention spans. Women usually have longer attention spans than men.

Understanding how to deal with grief after loss

Mandla Tofo



Some of the participants of the grief counselling course. Maureen Lamb is on the right in the second row (unfortunately, caught looking down)!

Maureen Lamb of Northwood Children's Hospice led a Grief Care and Counselling Course from 23 to 27 October which was attended by over 30 people each day.

My experience of the course was transformative. I do not think any of the participants knew what to expect, but guided through exercises, discussion, and teaching inputs, we were led through a myriad of thoughts, expression, and discoveries.

The course taught us that grief is the natural response to loss. By allowing ourselves to acknowledge and process the feelings and thoughts that are unique to each of us, we discovered that the strength and healing does come - when we are brave enough to allow ourselves to both acknowledge and share the reality of the journey.

As a group we really did grow, and benefitted well from the release that came from the quiet, hard work and homework that was entrusted to us daily and thereafter shared in so many ways.

Practical tools for helping others who are coping with grief were highlighted as was developing healthy coping mechanisms when supporting others in the grieving process.

These were really helpful sessions for us to receive, as was the exploration of self-care and holistic wellbeing. We were sorry when the course ended but we are hoping to attend the next course which will focus upon the care of children.

Tag lines!



Strength
is not hurting those who hurt you.

NMB Christian leaders look at children's ministry

When they met at Bible House on 9 November the NMB Christian Leader's listened to input on children's and youth ministry by Jenni Meyer of Petra Institute.

Their banner is "Building communities where children are welcome." They do this through courses such as: Entering the World of Children; Intergenerational Ministry; Working with Wounded Children; Tutor Training, and Standing up Against Bullying ... and many more.

Jenni said that Petra works with communities, churches and NGOs - coming alongside and listening to what is needed before putting a package together, building capacity and mentoring for life.

She said the training is exciting because it's for children and involves head, heart and hands (skills).

Contact Jenni on:
072 284 4564
or - info@petra.co.za

Ashes to joy

Ruby Jewel



The Rector of St Mary's Cathedral, Fumi Kula, hands Nomaki Kila parcels of goods, and cash to rebuild her house.

Nomaki Kila is a fruit vendor in Govan Mbeki Street, Central. She sells her wares opposite the Cathedral.

We have been neighbours for many years and our friendship was strengthened by the care and love we share for each other as commanded by our Lord.

Many years ago Nomaki saved the Cathedral thousands of rand by reporting that perpetrators were active on the church property. Because of her actions they were caught.

Nomaki's house burnt down recently and she lost everything. An appeal was made to the parish of St Mary's Cathedral who opened their hearts to Nomaki's plight and donations flooded in. Nomaki was grateful for the love and care shown by St Mary's parish and said, "This is how people should care for each other."

So far she has built one room with the cash donations received and hopefully she will receive more donations which will enable her to complete her house.

Galatians 6: 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

Called to carry the Cross

Nokuzola Vumazonke



Bishop Eddie with the combined Confirmation candidates from St Andrew's and St Anne's.

On Saturday 9 September Bishop Eddie held a combined Confirmation for 11 candidates from St Andrew's and ten from St Anne's Chapel.

In his sermon Bishop Eddie gave the candidates five ingredients to live by: communion, compassion, cooperation, consideration and that all are called to carry the Cross.

The candidates from St Andrew's had been trained by Nokuzola Vumazonke and Ntombekhaya Nyanga while those from St Anne's had been trained by Tembela Vumazonke and Nokuphumla Nzenze. The Philippians 2:1–11 reading was done by one of the candidates, Sibabalwe Daniel.

Spirits revived at AA Conference

Patrick Nodwele



The Rector of All Saints', Xhanti Mhlontlo, and his wife Phumza, with the Rector of St Matthias, Patrick Nodwele, and his wife Zodwa, at Anglicans Ablaze 2023.

Four members of our Diocese travelled to Johannesburg to attend Anglicans Ablaze 2023. We were, the Rector of All Saints', Xhanti Mhlontlo, and his wife Phumza, and myself, the Rector of St Matthias, Patrick Nodwele, and my wife Zodwa.

Anglicans Ablaze was a spiritual revival for me and Zodwa. I can safely say this; we have grown spiritually. The talks, workshops and worship services make it a place to be for someone who wishes to be revived spiritually.

How I wish that many more people of God from our Diocese would attend AA.

Being grateful for life

My alarm goes off ... I can hear. I look in the mirror ... I can see. I turn on the shower ... I can feel the warm water. Thank you! I am grateful for life!

I reflect for a moment on those who are blind, deaf, lame, and those facing life-threatening illnesses. Whatever challenges I may have, they are far outweighed by the blessings of life.

'The one who is rich is the one who is satisfied with their portion.' I am satisfied, therefore I am rich. I am grateful for life!

A small excerpt from an article by Philip Krawitz - Executive Chairman of Cape Union Mart Group of Companies which comprises around 250 stores in South Africa, Namibia and Botswana.

Christians have duty to vote

When the Nelson Mandela Bay Christian leaders met on 12 October at St Luke's Catholic Centre they were united in their call for every Christian to vote in the 2024 elections.



In their discussions the leaders noted that 85% of South Africans say they are Christians, so if every one of them voted they can bring the changes for a good, godly government. Clergy will be encouraged to teach their congregations that, first of all, it is their Christian duty to vote and that they ask the Lord to help them vote for people (or parties) who have integrity, are just, and fear the Lord.

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." 1Tim 2:1-2

Leaders were asked to set up a registration point (make sure it is apolitical) at every church one Sunday and make sure every Christian registers to vote (on-line if necessary).

They were also asked to encourage every Christian to join **SA Belongs to Jesus** (on Telegram) to pray for SA for two minutes three times a day when the prayer pointers are posted.

Other points discussed

• **Food security -** Encourage every church to start a food garden 'Farming God's Way' and parishioners to do so too if they have a garden. This could grow into wonderful small businesses (already one SPAR is sourcing their fresh vegetables from churches in their area)!

• **Jobs -** Encourage congregants who are out of work to join a 'Work for a Living' course / churches also to be encouraged to run the courses;

• **Green footprint –** Invite members of Sustainable Seas Trust - eg Dr Stacey Webb - (SST – 222 Main Road Walmer) to come and talk to congregations;

• **All Wards have a member on the NMB Religious Desk group –** make sure your Ward has a Christian in good standing;

• **Need a groundswell of action –** for example, William Wilberforce sent in 519 petitions from the people calling for the abolishment of slavery! The Church needs to mobilise to bring about change.

Closing the Gap

TCN - Trevor Jennings



"Closing the Gap" - time for the Church to again play a major role in "educating" our nation. Listening to Jacques Pretorius setting out the Anglican Church's vision going forward. At the Clergy Retreat at Willows Resort on 8 November were Trevor Jennings (TCN); Jacques Pretorius (Guest Speaker from the Archbishop's Office); Bishop Eddie; Pastor Johannes Welskit (AFM) and Dominee Danie Mouton (NGK).

Remembering the fallen

Mandisa Tabata

"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of justice".

Martin Luther King

The Cathedral joined many around the world in celebrating Remembrance Day, or Poppy Day.

As a parish we are blessed to have a survivor of the Second World War, Frank Hardy, who is 102 years old. It was an emotional moment when he laid a wreath and paid tribute to those who did not survive.

As he laid the wreath it evoked emotions some of us did not know existed. His presence makes us feel that we share in what they felt, fear of fighting in a war, whether just or not, and knowing they would be lucky to survive.

As we remember those fallen heroes we should not forget the many in our own country who gave their lives fighting for a just cause. We thank God for the freedom we gained and that we were able to renew ourselves.



Assistant Priest Lindelwa Mama with Frank Hardy.

Support charity shops this Christmas



Dawn Spence is admiring some glasses at the Beehive charity shop run by Desré Foaden at St Saviour's.

As belts tighten this Christmas, it may be a season to put Christ back into Christmas.

Instead of spending lots of money on gifts, rather visit charity shops and find the wonderful gems they have for you to buy. In doing so you will help the NGO to continue existing.

Lots to buy at Spring Fair



Last minute touches being put to the laden tables of goods for sale.

St Cuthbert's held their annual Spring Fair on Saturday 4 November. The tables were piled high with a wonderful variety of goods, plants and eats and buyers seemed to find a good variety of items to purchase. Many enjoyed a catch-up with friends while enjoying tea and delicious scones with jam and cream.

Roofs looking great after cleaning project

Phililе Lobese



Two brave men clean and repaint the roof of St Timothy's church building.

St Timothy's in Motherwell recently embarked on a roof cleaning project . The project was financially supported by Good Samaritans of our parish and friends. The church roof was washed, painted and the leaks were sealed. The rectory's roof was also cleaned.

Interesting facts about the Holy Land from old book



"Palaestina ex Monumentis Veteribus Illustrata."

In 1695 Hadriani Relandi wrote this book. It is written in Latin and Relandi described what was then called Palestine.

Relandi was a geographer, cartographer, traveler, philologist, and knew several European languages, Arabic, ancient Greek and Hebrew. He visited almost 2 500 settlements mentioned in the Bible. The research was conducted as follows:

He first created the map of the Holy Land. He then determined every settlement mentioned in the Bible or the Talmud by its original name.

If the original was Jewish, he cited the appropriate verse in the Holy Scriptures. If the source was Roman or Greek, he cited the context in Latin or Greek.

In the end he did a population census according to settlements.

Here are his main conclusions and some facts:

• The country is mostly empty; promiscuous; sparsely populated; the main population is Jerusalem, Acre, Safed, Jaffa, Tiberias and Gaza.

• The majority of the population is Jewish and Christian; very few Muslims, mainly nomadic Bedouins.

• The only exception is Nablus, where about 120 Muslims are left and about 70 Samaritans.

• About 700 people lived in Nazareth, the capital of the Galilee - all Christians.

• There were about 5 000 people in Jerusalem, almost all Jews and a few Christians.

• In 1695, everyone knew that the origin of the state was Jewish.

• There is not a single settlement in Palestine that has Arab roots in its name.

• Most of the settlements have a Jewish origin, and in some cases Greek or Roman Latin.

• Apart from the city of Ramla, there is no Arab settlement that has an original Arab name. Jewish, Greek or Latin names changed to Arabic that do not make any sense in Arabic. In Arabic there is no meaning in names like: Acre, Haifa, Jaffa, Nablus, Gaza or Jenin, and names like Ramallah, Al-Khalil (Hebron), Al-Quds (Jerusalem) - they have no Arabic philological or historical roots. For example, in 1696 Ramallah was called Beit El (House of God), Hebron was called Hebron and the Cave of the Double was called Al-Khalil (Abraham's nickname) by the Arabs.

• Relandi mentions Muslims only as nomadic Bedouins who came to the cities as seasonal workers in agriculture or on construction sites.

• Approximately 550 people lived in Gaza, half of them Jews and half Christians. Jews succeeded in agriculture, especially in vineyards, olives and wheat; Christians engaged in trade and transport.

• Jews lived in Tiberias and Safed, but their occupation is not mentioned, with the exception of traditional fishing in the Sea of Galilee.

• In the village of Umm El Fahm, for example, 10 families lived, all Christians (about 50 people). A small Maronite church stood there.

Hadriani Relandi's (1676-1718) book on Palestine was published in Utrecht in 1714.

Green Piece

A prayer:

We praise you, our Lord and God, for the variety of your creation and for the sanctity you have bestowed on all life through creation.

May we know the sanctity of life and foster the conservation and preservation of the variety of God-given life.

May we never - knowingly or otherwise - be responsible for the extinction of a plant or animal.

Lord God, may new life fill all of us, through the gift of your Holy Spirit, to know your wonder, your love and the abundant life you give.

Some ways to help save our planet:

• Do prevent pollution of the air, water and soil;

• do buy environmentally friendly products (don't use poisonous insecticides in the garden);

• do avoid non-returnable containers and polystyrene cups and plates;

• when buying drinks do make sure they are in biodegradable containers;

• avoid plastic bags / wrapping where possible;

• do get involved in recycling projects;

• do install solar panels, water tanks and other environmentally friendly items if you can afford them;

• uphold the sanctity of life - do not kill birds, animals and fish just for sport.

Honour God by preserving all that he created.

MU members on radio

Phililе Lobese



MU members share the Gospel over the radio.

On 5 October, MU members of St Timothy Parish in Motherwell, conducted the Umhlobo Wenene FM weekly religious programme called 'Ngenani Emasangweni Ngendumiso'.

Four of the members preached and two did the prayers. They based their sermons on the Gospel of Mark 5:34.

Put Christ back into this Christ-mass

Do remember that the Lord does not want you to get yourselves into debt by giving expensive gifts and buying expensive clothes to wear to church on Christmas Day.

All He wants of you is to enjoy celebrating a day set aside to be thankful for His birth because it led to His life given for your salvation!

Gifts are given as a token of remembrance of that gift of life he has given you ... not to be bigger or better than what someone else is giving ...

... nor do you need to dress in expensive clothes to attend church ... all he wants is your presence there (in jeans and tackies, if that is all you have!) to celebrate and worship him. In other words, bless him with your presence NOT your debt from presents.

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