

Dean's Letter, 9 June 2019

Dear Cathedral family, brothers and sisters in Christ

The Day of Pentecost, which we celebrate today, is the birthday of the New Testament church: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those first disciples, and on the generations that followed, until our time. A very important part of our witness as the church is our life together, and the way we are living out the Christian way of faithful discipleship. We saw something of that in our recent Diocesan Synod. Here are the reports from our two lay representatives, Tandiwe Gabavana and Theo Duxbury.

Tandiwe writes:

It is our duty to report to you on matters related to synod. Representing the Cathedral in our capacity as laity reps. As our Diocese we could be really proud of our achievements, and Synod encourages us to carry on doing so. I'm going to touch on some highlights of the achievements from our various Guilds and departments.

Most Guilds have been involved with fundraising sanitary towels and cups as part of their stewardship and giving. We had two emotional testimonials from girls who received sanitary towels from St Agnes Guild and they thanked the Guild on how it has helped and contributed to them no longer missing school.

The Bernard Mizeki Guild and the Diocesan Youth Guild both touched on how they have grown in numbers the past years. Bernard Mizeki had also opened a Young men's Bernard Mizeki Guild.

The Anglican Woman's Fellowship not only being top at the Provisional Fundraising awards, have received 3 awards, Fundraising; Project implementation and Long service awards.

They have also fundraised for St Joseph's day which supports theological education, as well as the Thabo Makgoba bursary fund, which supports two disadvantaged school.

The Mothers Union helped a disabled young girl in Adelaide with an artificial leg costing around R20 000 and have also given the family a home which is yet to be handed over. The Mothers Union has also fundraised contributing to the Diocesan Centre.

One of the Departments of our Diocese, the Grahamstown Diocesan Development Trust, has placed 45 TVET learners for 18 months at workplaces. The department has also given out a number of Bursaries and Internships to help decrease the number of unemployed youth in our communities. Two shared their touching testimonials, one of them mentioning that she is now a partner of a law firm in East London.

Theodore writes:

Synod engaged in robust debates interrogating motions dealing with a variety of issues affecting the lives of the people of God, issues relating to education, leadership, the environment and the recognition of iconic figures in the life of the Anglican Church. The following is a summary of motions passed by Synod:

- i. Synod affirmed the need for the appropriate theological equipment of the clergy with the emergence of a resolution setting standards for minimum requirement before

ordination, namely Diploma in Theology at NQF Level 5 and a Bachelor Degree in Theology

- ii. Synod promoted for the introspective reflection on the need for transformation within our Church and expressed the urge for the Church to be relevant to the current needs as dictated by the context of the day
- iii. Another prominent concern was for the challenges related to environmental awareness and the sustenance of natural resources, particularly food and water security. Synod passed a motion of appreciation and concern for the breakdown of relationships between Makana Municipality and The Gift of the Givers. It is our prayer that the parties should find each other and rapidly resolve their misunderstandings so that the project be resumed for the benefit of the people of God living in Makhanda; who are the innocent victims
- iv. Synod decried the murders of farming community members particularly of farm workers and farmers alike. The taking of human life of defenceless victims can never be acceptable under any circumstances
- v. Synod also passed a motion of affirmation in recognition of the iconic figure, the late Rev Canon James Calata - who was an Anglican prophetic priest in this Diocese, born and bred in Rabula and who had ministered at St Matthews, Keiskammahoek - by the ANC Government, naming the Provincial ANC Office in his name, as well as that the Religious Heritage Expo has endorsed the erection of a Statute in his honour to be unveiled on 06 -08th September 2019
- vi. Synod passed on a message of congratulations to Premier Phumulo Masuale and Premier Elect Lubabalo Mabuyane, with a plea to the affected MECs to promptly address the issues responsible for service delivery protest so that an end can be brought to such unnecessary actions

The honoured guest, the Deputy Registrar of the ACSA and Lay Canon in the Diocese of Johannesburg, Adv. Rosalie Manning educated and empowered the Members of Synod on the issues of Human Sexuality and Same Sex Unions as well as on How to build a Safe and Inclusive Church.

Mr Theodore Duxbury and Ms Tandiwe Gabavana would like to express their sincere vote of thanks and gratitude for electing them, as youth and laity, to represent The Cathedral Parish at the Diocesan Synod.

My love to you all

Andrew Hunter