

Dear Colleagues,

I share a prayer concern of utmost urgency which is that of the anticipated vote-of-no-confidence in President Jacob Zuma.

The information detailed below gives some insight on the issue and I pray that you will be able to participate in this initiative as your conscience leads you.

My most recent facebook posting indicates a strong response to the prayer-plan.

Warm greetings,

Michael
The Very Revd Michael Weeder
Dean of Cape Town
The Cathedral of St George the Martyr
29 Upper Orange
Oranjezicht
8001, Cape Town
South Africa
Email mweeder@mweb.co.za

'NO CROSS, NO CROWN'

An open letter to the African National Congress Members of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa:

- From the prayer mat to the street -
FOR THE VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE
- For a Parliament that Listens to the People -

My dear brothers and sisters of the African National Congress Members of Parliament

Not a day goes by that one will not hear about some criticism or other about the failure of our President Jacob Zuma to uphold the values of his office. And in a few weeks, you will be called upon to participate in a vote of no-confidence intended to expedite the removal of President Zuma from power. There is the view that as ANC MPs you would use your majority to maintain the status quo.

Until November 2016, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu used to preside at our St George's cathedral's early morning mass on a Friday. We would pray before processing into the chapel. Reflecting on that time I wrote:

I shall go unto your house
I sought and found comfort in words
and the pleasure it brings.
Then I heard you call me back
to where you stood, waiting.
I felt your hand touch
and lead me to myself.

Be mindful that our struggle always begins on the holy ground of our private and personal approach to the burning bush of justice. At the end of our days we will stand in front of our Creator and no party mandate will be asked of

us. We will be required to account for our wounds obtained out of love for others. If we bear no scars we will be asked, "Was there nothing worth loving enough to fight for?"

The ANC has been the womb of the Struggle for freedom. But we joined the struggle for justice out of love for our people. And the liberation movement was born out of an organised response to the cry of the oppressed

The term, "shepherds of the people" refers not only to priest and pastors, to rabbis, imams and the gurus of our faith communities. It also speaks to your calling, which is that of being our elected representative.

Our shared calling is best exemplified by a life that proclaims what Chief Albert Luthuli termed "the gospel of service and sacrifice". Chief Luthuli uttered these words in 1955 at a congress of the ANC in Natal, where he admonished those who failed to accept fully "the basic truth enshrined in the saying 'no cross, no crown'".

This year is the 50th anniversary of Chief Luthuli becoming the first South African to receive the Nobel Prize. How would you mark this moment, O you servants of the people, if not with a sterling act of discipleship which is that of standing for the truth?

When you cast your vote out of a conscience lit by love, and not by anything which diminishes the bright cause of freedom and the hopes of the poor, you will not be standing on your own. You will be in the company of the saints of our revolution. Basil February and the other martyrs of the Wankie campaign will be with you. As will Helen Joseph, Ahmed Timol and Dora Tamana.

They will be holding your hearts and will steady your hands in truth's name.

Steve Biko will be there, reminding you that we are never on our own. And hark the voice of Vuyisile Minyi, his gallows-song, "Basopa!" Oom Reg September and Alex La Guma, Cissie Gool and those colossi of our hope and dreams, Lilian Ngoyi, Robert Sobukwe, Albertina and Walter Sisulu, Joe Slovo, OR Tambo and our Madiba will be smiling down upon you.

May your witness proclaim Parliament as a place where, as Saint Paul writes in Ephesians, where there is no falsehood. Where the truth is spoken and where there no "room for the devil".

As from Tuesday we will pray at each of our two daily services for each ANC MP by name. I will share this prayer project with my fellow deans across the country.

Here is the prayer which will be prayed before the statue of the African Madonna throughout the day:

A Prayer of conscience for those who will participate in the vote of no-confidence in President Jacob Zuma:

This day, by the grace of your embracing spirit,
O loving Creator, we bow before you,
the fortress of our unconquered hope.
Send us like arrows from your bow of mercy

in the cause of those, the unseen jewels
in the crown of our land,
who give voice to your love. Amen

(from By the way by Michael Weeder, - Dean of The Anglican Cathedral of St George the Martyr, Cape Town, Saturday Weekend Argus July 22 2017)

PROGRAMME OF PRAYER FOR ACTION

- From the prayer mat to the street -

FOR THE VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE

- For a Parliament that Listens to the People -

STARTING TUESDAY 25 JULY 2017

- In the churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and all places of prayer -

1. All who assemble for daily congregational or private prayers in mosques, temples, churches, synagogues are asked to be part of this prayer project
2. We start our national prayer outreach on Tuesday 25 July 2017
3. Each day we pray aloud for 15 members of parliament, naming them in alphabetical order.

(The list of names can be obtained from The Parliamentary Liaison Office of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference: Info@cplo.org.za, or, from

Kairos Southern Africa: kairossouthernafrica@gmail.com

4. This is rolling plan of action unfolding each Spirit-led day: Please improvise and share your insights. The emphasis is not on what must be done (often by others) but on what we can do based on your organisational direction.

ONE LOVE FROM THE HEART OF ONE NATION! (ONE LOVE, ONE NATION!)
FORWARD TO A PARLIAMENT THAT LISTENS! (FORWARD!)
FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S POWER
IN A PEOPLES PARLIAMENT! FORWARD! (FORWARD!)