



CATHOLIC NEWS BULLETIN

ARCHDIOCESE OF DURBAN

DECEMBER 2021



CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS IN 2021

Christmas is around the corner and I do believe that many of us are physically and emotionally exhausted. Therefore, we are all looking forward to the end of the year. It has indeed been a rough road that we have travelled since 1st January 2021.

I kindly invite you to reflect on the Cantic of Zechariah (Luke 1:68-79):

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel! He has visited his people and redeemed them.

He has raised up for us a mighty saviour in the house of David his servant, as he promised by the lips of the Holy Ones, those who were his prophets from of old.

A saviour who would free us from our foes, from the hands of all who hate us. So his love for our fathers is fulfilled, and his holy covenant remembered.

He swore to Abraham our father to grant us, that free from fear, and saved from the hands of our foes, we might serve him in holiness and justice all the days of our life in his presence.

As for you, little child, you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most High. You shall go ahead of the Lord, to prepare his ways before him, to make known to his people their salvation, through forgiveness of all their sins, the loving kindness of the heart of our God, who visits us like the dawn from on high.

He will give light to those in darkness, those who dwell in the shadow of death, and guide us into the way of peace.

Since the beginning of this year, we have seen and experienced many things which left some of us doubting if there is a future at all. We have seen Covid-19 claiming the lives of so many people some of whom were well known to us or even dear to us. We have seen millions of citizens going for vaccination against Covid but others are very sceptical about being vaccinated. We have seen hundreds of students finishing their tertiary education but unable to get jobs. We have heard of women and children having been raped even by men who were very close to them. We have heard of young women who were murdered in a gruesome way by their so-called “boyfriends”. We shamefully watched the looting that took place in July in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. This has rightly or wrongly defined us as an angry nation. The cost of living has become unbearable due to fuel prices that have shot up recently.

The Cantic of Zechariah which I began with ties up with Isaiah 9:2 when he says: “People that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone.” Considering the things that I have enumerated above, one could say that we also live in darkness and in a land of deep shadow.

We need the light. Jesus is that light who enlightens the darkness. At Christmas we must welcome our newly born King and celebrate his infinite love, humility, mercifulness, forgiveness and reconciliation. We are being encouraged to make an effort to be reconciled with our enemies including those whose contact numbers we have deleted in our cell phones. Let us forgive people who have hurt us deeply. We all are in need of mercifulness and therefore let us show mercy to our enemies especially those who were once close to us. At Christmas we celebrate Emmanuel (God with us). If God is Love, then our Christmas celebrations cannot be driven by anything that is contrary to love.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I am now four months in the Archdiocese of Durban. A lot has happened. I have ordained one priest and ten deacons. I have been to 13 parishes for Confirmation, visited 3 schools and other institutions, e.g. Denis Hurley Centre and Napier Centre 4 Healing. Thank you very much for receiving me so warmly in all the places that I visited. Together with the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Leaders, we visited places which were affected by violence in July: Inanda, Phoenix and Mooi River.

May I appeal to you that we enjoy ourselves with a high degree of responsibility during the festive season. Washing our hands regularly, wearing masks and observing social distancing should be the norm. We encourage everyone to go for vaccination.

I wish you a blessed Christmas Season and prosperous New Year.

+ Siegfried Mandla Jwara CMM
ARCHBISHOP OF DURBAN





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Vaccination: An Act of Love

By Annemarie Paulin-Campbell

It is heartening to see that at last (if rather belatedly), there is a significantly increased uptake on vaccination spurred on perhaps in part by President Ramaphosa's speech or the recognition that cases are rising extremely rapidly with the spread of the new Omicron variant.

Leaving aside the rare situation of those with medical conditions, which make vaccination inadvisable, we have a moral and spiritual responsibility to be vaccinated. Vaccination is not just about protecting ourselves from serious illness or death. It is also about protecting those with whom we come into contact. University of Melbourne scientists explain that a vaccinated person is twenty times less likely to infect someone else. While some of us may be strong and healthy, and more likely to endure a bout of Covid without much difficulty, unvaccinated, we may be more likely to infect someone who is vulnerable and who may even die from the virus.

Being vaccinated also helps protect those who are immunocompromised and won't themselves get the same level of protection from the vaccine. Or those who, for medical reasons, cannot get the vaccination. The more people in the population that are vaccinated, the safer the overall environment and the less space there is for the virus to mutate and develop new variants.

The spread of the virus also has huge implications for the economy and people's livelihoods. Sectors such as the tourism, liquor and entertainment industries have been badly impacted. Some have lost their life savings trying to save their businesses and take care of their staff, many of whom are breadwinners for extended families. Many workers have been retrenched as there is no money to pay them. The unemployment levels in South Africa at 34.9% are at their highest level since 2008.

In some Catholic circles, it is disturbing that people are being told that the vaccines contain cells of aborted fetuses and that they should not take them. This is incorrect. The vaccines themselves do not contain any aborted foetal cells. It is true that in the 1970s and '80s, scientists did use foetal tissue to start the cell lines that are used to test drugs now. However, the Vatican's *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)* has been very clear that where alternative vaccines are not available, "it is morally acceptable to receive Covid19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process."

Pope Francis has been vaccinated and consistently urges people to vaccinate as an act of love "for oneself, love for our family and friends, and love for all peoples. Love is also social and political."

The pandemic has made it increasingly evident that we are all interconnected and interdependent. Our decision whether or not to vaccinate does not affect us alone. It has significant ramifications for our world. Right now, widespread vaccination is our best and only viable option to stop the pandemic. Let's encourage those who could be vaccinated but are hesitant to see this as the act of love it is.

CONDOLENCES

Our heartfelt condolences to Fr Mtshengiseni Dlamini and his family on the death of his aunt, his father's sister. Please remember the family in your prayers.

CHANCERY CLOSED

Please note that the Chancery closes for the Christmas and New Year period on **15 December 2021** and reopens on **3 January 2022**. While the Chancery opens on the 3rd January, a number of staff will still be on their annual leave and so the Chancery will be operating on a skeleton staff for a couple of weeks. If there are any emergencies priests are asked to contact their Dean who will then contact Father Brett Williams.

ECCESTASTICAL RETURNS

We are in the process of emailing forms for the Ecclesiastical Returns for the year ending 31.12.2021 to all parishes. Completed forms and parish returns for Baptism, Marriage and Confirmation must be forwarded to the Chancellor by **31 January 2022**.

2022 CONFIRMATIONS

Below is the list of parishes requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation next year with the date and time the celebration is scheduled to take place. Parish priests wanting to call attention to omissions, change a date or postpone a celebration to the following year should contact Helene at the Vicar General's office as soon as possible vg@aod.org.za

January	21	18h00	Amanzimtoti	Vicar General
	23	10h00	Merebank	Vicar General
February	4	18:00	Virginia	Archbishop
	6		Greytown	Archbishop
	12	17h00	Morningside	Archbishop
	13	08h30	Pinetown	Vicar General
	19	17h00	Clairwood	Vicar General
	27	09h00	Bellair-Queensburgh	Archbishop
	27	09h00	PMB. Woodlands	Vicar General
April	22	18h00	Westville	Archbishop
May	1		Ekukhanyeni	Archbishop

June	5	10h00	Point	Archbishop
	26	10h00	Matikwe	Archbishop
July	10	08h00	Verulam	Archbishop
August	21	09h00	Mpophomeni	Archbishop
	28	09h30	PMB. Raisethorpe	Archbishop
September	10	17h30	Berea	Archbishop
	17	17h00	Bluff	Archbishop
	25	10h00	Newlands East	Vicar General
October	9		Estcourt	Archbishop
	9	10h00	Hillcrest (Embo)	Vicar General
	16	09h00	Ntuzuma	Archbishop
	16	08h00	Kloof	Vicar General
	23	08h00	Hillcrest	Archbishop
	23		Imbali	Vicar General
	30	10h00	Emmanuel Cathedral	Archbishop
	30	09h00	Sydenham	Vicar General
November	5	17h30	Red Hill	Vicar General
	6	09h30	Wentworth	Archbishop
	13	08h00	Machibisa	Archbishop
	20	09h00	Bethlehem	Archbishop

DIOCESAN DIARY

January 2022

8-9	Montebello Dominican Sisters	Archbishop
11	Metropolitan Bishops and Vicar Generals, Mariannahill	
12	Seminarians Commission	
13	Seminarians Interviews	
14	Ntshongweni Committee	
18-26	SACBC Admin Board and Plenary Session	Archbishop
21	Confirmation: Amanzimtoti	Vicar General
23	Confirmation: Merebank	Vicar General
27	College of Consultors	
28	Maris Stella School Opening Mass	Archbishop
29	Catechetical Event	Archbishop