

ST CYPRIAN'S CHURCH

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RECTOR'S LETTER

26 May 2021

Dear Friends and Members of St Cyprian's Parish

Quo Vadis?

Certainly an upside down world turned inside out laden with confusion, fear, uncertainty and a myriad of conspiracy theories that may or may not be true! Who knows!?! What we do know is that the world and our world has changed. The cost has been and is enormous to society from job losses, to isolation, increased poverty and resultant crime, fear, depression, death and disorientation for the new abnormal normal.

Everyone irrespective of status and station is affected. Organisations, business, trusts, religious faiths, sport, governments etc., etc. have had to adjust, some at great cost, loss and pain.

So where are we as a community of faith, the people of St Cyprian's, called to offer values of support, hope and love in these unprecedented times? In the fifteenth month period April 2020 to May 2021 St Cyprian's was closed for ten months. Since re-opening at the end of March attendance at Mass is roughly 30% of pre-Covid attendance.

As your Parish Priest I ask myself, 'How does one interpret this?' Yes a number of parishioners have died and some have emigrated and others relocated. One also takes into account that there are members who have comorbidities and naturally people over 60 are waiting for the vaccine - but what about everyone else?

Quo Vadis? is a Latin phrase meaning 'where are you going?' From the Apocryphal Acts of Peter - as St Peter flees from crucifixion in Rome, he meets Our Lord on the Appian Way carrying his cross. St Peter says to Our Lord, "Domine, quo vadis?" (Lord, where are you going?) to which Our Lord replies, "Romam eo iterum crucifigi" (I am going to Rome to be crucified again) St Peter then gains the courage to return to Rome where he is martyred and insists on being crucified upside down for he felt unworthy to die in the same manner as Our Lord.

While we live in a violent world and a very violent country with the current statistics for murder of 55 people per day it does not apply to being a member of the Christian faith as it did in the early Church and where today in parts of the world Christians continue to be killed for their faith and churches destroyed.

We are at a critical point to build community, to be a worshipping and affirming community of faith in Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8) The world has known greater and more devastating catastrophes. Each of us have

to find the moral centre of faith to be courageous in Christ and to assume the responsibility of belonging to the Body of Christ.

We have this most wonderful community, we have a beautiful place of worship, we are a vibrant, active and caring Parish. We need to do everything we can to build a worshipping community to the Glory of God.

Quo Vadis? Where are you going?

SUSTAINABILITY

Covid-19 has been costly for the Parish. Besides been closed for ten months and not receiving the cash collection, during this time a number people have discontinued their contribution to the Church. Fortunately with the generosity of a few parishioners together with severe cost cutting measures, and the reduction of an employee cost due to retirement we are just keeping our head above water.

This is an appeal to every member to consider your level of contribution to the Parish and to those who have stopped contributing to assist the Parish with financial support.

I wish to thank Julie Russell who has undertaken to help with the cleaning of the Church on a weekly basis. If anyone is able to help, perhaps with the adoption of one of the Chapels, that would be greatly appreciated. Please assist by leaving the books neatly in order and the kneelers hung on the hook at the end of Mass before leaving the church.

FATE

As fate would have it, for the second year in a row, we have, after due consideration made the decision to cancel this year's fete until more favourable conditions prevail.

This is a costly decision for the Parish. For while the "tithes" (contributions) from parishioners maintain the daily/monthly/annual running costs of the Parish at the current budget of R732 000/R61 000 per month, the fete and other fundraising ventures provide funds for the Specific Funds of the Parish that meet major expenses such as Maintenance, Organ Repairs, Car Replacement, Vestments and Furnishings, Mission and Ministry etc. The Fete boosts these funds by over R100 000 per annum.

We need, however, to find ways of raising funds on a smaller scale in the interim to support the Parish Specific Funds. The 100 Club is one such fundraising effort. Ideally we need 100 people to contribute R150 for the year which raises R15 000. At year end R7 500 is drawn in prizes and R7 500 is allocated to the Specific Funds. If you can support this there are 100 Club cards at the entrance to the Church or via EFT please use the reference 100 and your surname. Any other fundraising suggestions would be most welcome.

WE CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH!!

Errol Bristow our Parish Organist since 1981, some forty years, was recently diagnosed with macular degeneration. No amount of specialised treatment has

enabled Errol to be able to read the music and hence to play the organ. It was with huge sadness that I received his letter of resignation effective as of 30 April 2021.

One cannot even begin to imagine the depth of emotion for Errol, having dedicated a lifetime of service to the Parish through his incredible gift of music.

For most of us we saw Errol at the organ on Sundays, Festivals and Special Services and Events. Behind the scenes more time was spent choosing the hymns, anthems, preludes and postludes and voluntaries, weekly practising, and rehearsals when we still had a choir, plus numerous weddings, funerals and above all the demands of the Rector. Errol also tuned and did general maintenance on the organ for many years which has been a huge cost saving for the Parish. Thank you Errol for your loyalty, dedication, professionalism and unfailing commitment.

It is incumbent upon the Parish that we show our appreciation to Errol for forty years of service with an appropriate and suitable gratuity. If you would like to contribute to Errol's gratuity, please enclose your gift in an envelope marked "Organist" or an EFT with the reference Organist.

As is our wont at St Cyprian's we will have a suitable occasion to present Errol with our gratuity of appreciation.

IN THE INTERIM

Finding a replacement organist today is like finding "hens' teeth." We have been fortunate to have Jenny Gaul and last Sunday Heather Sumpton play the piano while once a month Andrew-John (AJ) Bethke is able to play the organ and now this Sunday Arthur Dixon will play the organ. Between them we will have musical accompaniment until

AN APPOINTMENT

I am pleased to announce that Andrew-John known as AJ has accepted and been appointed to the position of Director of Music and Organist at St Cyprian's with effect from August this year. AJ has, among many other things, a Master of Sacred Music from the Southern Methodist University (Dallas Texas), a Master of Music Degree from Rhodes University and a Master of Theology Degree from UKZN. We look forward to welcoming him as a member of the parish in his capacity as Director of Music and Organist.

COMMUNICATION

In this modern world of technology we are aiming to send Parish communication by email which in itself is a cost saving measure as well as on the Rector's Broadcast Group. We need your email address and to receive the almost daily prayer and communication on the Broadcast Group your cell phone number and you would need to save my number to your phone 0836580938. If you are not receiving this communication on email please send your email address to saintcyprian@telkomsa.net. If you are not receiving the Broadcast Group prayers etc. please WhatsApp your name and number to my phone.

PARISH BANK DETAILS

Standard Bank
Account Name St Cyprian's Church
Account Number 05 11891 35
Branch/Number Gale Place 042526

KEEP GOING

'Because you didn't come this far only to come this far.' I have certainly found the experience of Covid-19 very disorientating and stressful as I am sure you have. It is not easy to face the "new normal." We need each other and we need a strong community of faith for encouragement, love and strength.

Let us be proud to be Christian, people of faith, to share the experience that Christians have faced in the past. Let's run the race that St Paul speaks of, with fervour and determination for life is transitory and eternity everlasting.

With Every Blessing



FR DANE