

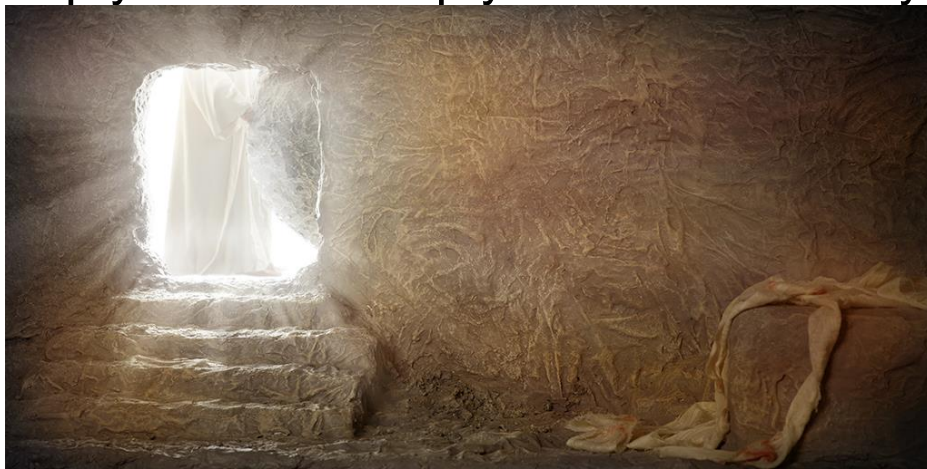


*Ad Clerum*

April 2019

Number 01/20

## Empty Tomb....Empty Church.....Really?



Jesus said, *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”*. Then said the Jews, *“Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?”* But he spake of the temple of his body. [Jn 19: 21] Easter was glorious, a very different Easter for all the world..... Alleluia, He is Risen!

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Lent is over, and what a Lent it has been! Our Lord has forced us all deep into the wilderness, there to battle with our issues of relevance as people, the state of our families and our ability to 'survive' as nations and as Christian institutions.

It has been an interesting and most creative time.

Although the world has been reeling under the assault of this '*evil, unseen enemy*' as some world leaders have called Covid19, it has exposed just how terrified people are of death and dying. Millions of people have meekly stayed at home, fearful that they would die if the 'virus got them!' Easter gives the Christian blessed assurance, God's Presence and Life Everlasting, in the face of any eventuality.

As a Christian church, we have done very well in this time, and for that I sincerely congratulate you all. I have seen great creativity by you in communicating the Gospel via videos, websites and other electronic means. We have kept our momentum, and perhaps even gained some speed, as this 'crisis' has run rampant through the world.

More importantly, we have been at home and have prayed and said the Angelus together as a whole church. Hundreds of believers have joined me for a daily prayer time and intercessions for the world, the sick and the care givers. My little Chapel of St Agatha, with its two chairs, had more than 300 crammed into the room on Palm Sunday, and more than 500 of the faithful on Easter Day. We were experiencing the Communion of the Saints in action, Christians unified in expression and purpose as we worshipped together in spirit, the most Holy Sacrament of His most sacred Body and Blood.

The post-Easter Upper Room experiences have developed our understanding of '*spiritual communion*' which the lockdown has forced upon us. The lockdown has allowed us (*if we are astute and prepared to explore*) to 'see Jesus' in a new and different way. Dependent on our clergy, our parish church and the bread and wine of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, getting up and 'going to church', putting on our uniforms, smelling the incense, we have become dangerously used to the tangible trappings of our religious life? But our *Spiritual Communion* has forced an expansion of our understanding of 'church', of Sacrament and of fellowship. We have worshipped across space and time, been a part of a larger 'cloud of witnesses' than simply our home parish, and have shared worship with *all* the clergy and the Bishop in each of the sacred Holy Week services.....it was satisfying, and not too difficult to achieve, was it?

We are going to have to continue to function in this new reality for a little longer, until we are reunited with our brothers and sisters of the Faith. Until then, let us rejoice in this new-found unity of purpose and flourish as a community of true believers, enriched by every Grace provided by our gracious God through the Holy Ghost, and carrying the Gospel forward with even greater confidence.

Before I go, allow me to remind you of the miraculous Feeding of the Five Thousand, found in the Gospel of John chapter 6. I invite you to read the whole event, from when the people first gather, until the same people meet Jesus the next morning. A fascinating dialogue ensues between Jesus and the people seeking free food once again. As Jesus steers the conversation away from the tangible loaves and fishes, and leads their thoughts towards Himself as the Bread of Life, things become more heated, and even bitter. When he tells them, "*my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink*" they recoil in horror and leave. Only the true disciples are left.....St John Chrysostum (349-407AD), the fiery and gifted Patriarch of Constantinople, rightly said :

*"For when he gave them bread and filled their bellies, they said that he was a Prophet and sought to make him a King; but when he taught them concerning spiritual food, concerning eternal life, when he led them away from objects of sense, and spoke to them of a resurrection, and raised their thoughts to higher matters, when most they ought to have admired, they murmur and start away.."*

You have proven to be deep and true disciples of our Lord Jesus over this holy Eastertide, and I congratulate you on your spiritual resilience and ability to adapt. You are a blessing to the church!

Some very positive news across the TAC:

### **The Holy Trinity Seminary and Bible College**

Over the past months, our Chancellor, Paul du Plessis has been hard at work establishing our Seminary and Bible College. An excellent Board has been appointed, and ratified by the Diocesan Standing Committee, and all the necessary legal work has been done.

This has been one of the strategic goals of our church, and I am delighted to see it come to fruition in such a systematic and organised way. Its founding means that our church is able to direct the studies of our aspirant clergy in an acceptable, orthodox Christian direction, and it becomes a part of our process of discernment for vocations to the sacred Priesthood.

We have received all our study material, and the audio devices that accompany the books, and the curriculum has been well-researched and designed to allow our clergy the opportunity to go deeply into the Holy Scriptures, parish administration, preaching and other church related subjects.

We have begun with a strong enrolment of approximately 26 students for our 2020 intake, a good number, and the students have already commenced their academic year.

The 'Bible College' component is designed for our lay people, in order to offer solid, orthodox Christian teaching and bible study skills. This will probably begin in 2021, depending on developments around Covid-19 and its impact on society.

It is our desire that any person who wishes to study God's Word, can do so through the Holy Trinity Seminary and Bible College. We give thanks and praise to our Lord for this institution and it's ministry



*The founding meeting of the Holy Trinity Seminary and Bible College. From left to right: Ian Redelinghuys (Board member) Dianne Topper (Registrar) Paul du Plessis (Principal) Bishop Michael (Board Chairman) Vicar General Fr Augustine Koliti (Board member) and Fr Stephen Smuts (Dean of Students) make up the Board.*



*Member of the Diocesan Standing Committee hear the Principal's report on the Seminary.*

Lastly, our thanks go to St Andrew's Parish for accommodating the Seminary office and encouraging Paul du Plessis in this vital ministry.

## The work of the Traditional Anglican Communion College of Bishops and our own Diocesan Standing Committee makes history.

The College of Bishops TAC



The Southern African Diocesan Standing Committee



I am extremely proud of the work done by both these bodies. As a member of the TAC College of Bishops, we meet when necessary to discuss matters vital to our Communion and send issues to the member churches for approval and ratification. That is the work of the Diocesan Standing Committee. Many items come before the TAC College of Bishops, and we work towards consensus as far as is possible between Christian leaders. Our last meeting was 2019 in Calgary, Canada, and was well attended. As you can see, Bishop Wellington and I were present. Regrettably, Bishop Andrew Mukuyamba (Zambia) was not able to attend due to visa issues, and neither was Archbishop Samuel Prakash (India). A few of the USA Bishops were also not able to attend.

Although the Agenda had many issues to cover, our main Agenda Item was the amending of our TAC Constitution (or Concordat) to change us from a confederation of member churches in communion, to a Church. Thus, our amended Constitution would change our name from “**The Traditional Anglican Communion**” to “**The Traditional Anglican Church**”. It was a thorny issue, as people do enjoy their autonomy and independence....we needed the Holy Spirit’s intervention and guidance!

Anyone with experience of church meetings knows how cumbersome it can be to reach any decision. I wish to inform you that the Holy Spirit was indeed with us, as, under the chairmanship of Archbishop Shane Janzen, we were able to achieve what was thought to be impossible. In a full plenary meeting, after much prayer and deep discussion, the decision to move from a ‘communion’ to a ‘church’ was unanimously accepted by all the Bishops! God be praised for His guiding hand!

The implications for us are enormous. It gives us an immediate huge global presence. Rather than a scattering of ‘like-minded’ national churches, we are now a unified global body, The Traditional Anglican Church, with churches in many countries across the world.

For purposes of legalities, such as properties and bank accounts, the previous names would still function, but the College of Bishops urged all member churches to ratify these changes and inform the Primate of their decision.

Once again, the working of the Holy Spirit in the church could be clearly seen, as member church by member church, the change was accepted and ratified with great joy! We were the last group to meet, on the weekend after India and Australia had ratified the change, and our Diocesan Standing Committee unanimously accepted the work of the TAC College of Bishops and ratified the changes to the TAC Constitution. I thank them for their openness to God’s purpose for His church.

Shortly after I had sent notice of our decision to the Primate, he issued the Proclamation below to the whole of the TAC.

**We are now the Traditional Anglican Church!**

A blessed decision and a blessed day.



## TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH

### A PROCLAMATION

IN the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

TO the Faithful in Jesus Christ throughout the World,

#### GREETINGS:

**W**HEREAS the College of Bishops of the Traditional Anglican Communion in plenary session held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, on June 6, 2019, unanimously adopted the Constitution of the Traditional Anglican Church to replace the existing Concordat of the Traditional Anglican Communion; and did thereby reconstitute the Traditional Anglican Communion as a global Church within the historic Anglican tradition of Christ's one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church;

**A**ND WHEREAS the General Synods or highest governing bodies of the national Churches and Provinces of the Traditional Anglican Communion in 2019 and 2020 did subsequently ratify the Constitution of the Traditional Anglican Church adopted by the College of Bishops;

**A**ND WHEREAS the Concordat of the Traditional Anglican Communion provides that upon the ratification by the national Churches and Provinces, the changes adopted by the College of Bishops shall take effect;

**N**OW, THEREFORE, WE the Most Reverend Shane B. Janzen, Primate of the Traditional Anglican Communion, by and with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops, and with the ratification of the national Churches and Provinces as aforesaid in accordance with the provisions of the Concordat of the Traditional Anglican Communion, do hereby Proclaim the adoption and ratification of the CONSTITUTION OF THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH, and declare the same to be of full force and effect as of the date of this Proclamation.

**A**ND WE DO HEREBY require that all Our beloved brethren and all others whom these Presents may concern do take notice and govern themselves accordingly.

**G**IVEN under Our Hand and Seal at Our Cathedral Church of Saint John the Evangelist, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada this twenty-third day of March, in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty and of Our Primacy the Fourth.



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As a result of the Proclamation above and the decision by all the TAC churches to hear God's voice with regards to His church, we are all, without any delay, to change our letterheads, our flyers or pew sheets, and our signage at our Parishes to read **THE TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH**.

The recent Proclamation of a TAC Province of Africa now makes much more sense, and we are already in the process of welcoming Archbishop Jacob Welbourne and several parishes from Ghana into our Traditional Anglican Church, Province of Africa. The process is now so much easier than before.

Governance of the Traditional Anglican Church remains largely unchanged. Our Primate is still our Primate, and the TAC College of Bishops remains the authoritative body of the Church. Divided into Provinces, we now have a clear structure and the blockages for growth have been removed.

We already had a Province of India (Archbishop Samuel Prakash), and a Province of Latin America (Bishop Ruben Rodriguez), a Province of Canada (Archbishop Shane Janzen) and of the USA (Presiding Bishop Juan Garcia)

Our Province of Africa will comprise ourselves, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia and Ghana and others as they come to join us. We have had many enquiries but needed the appropriate structure to accommodate them.

The Province of Africa already has three Bishops; myself, Bishop Andrew Mukuyamba (Zambia) and Bishop Wellington Murinda (Zimbabwe) Others will join us, with their churches, and they will fall under our TAC Province of Africa umbrella. The Primate has appointed me as Metropolitan Archbishop of this Province. In addition, I remain Bishop Ordinary of Pretoria and Southern Africa.

As you can clearly see, you are part of a dynamic and forward-looking church. We have the structure in place to manage growth, and we believe that God will give the increase by the power of His Holy Spirit. We have never 'chased numbers', believing that quality is better than quantity, but equally, as confidence in the TAC has grown and the stability of the church has been observed by outsiders, we will inevitably experience growth from without. We ask your prayers that we will be responsible and wise in whom we accept, so as not to 'poison our own well'.

Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of an independent Ghana had a powerful slogan:

*"FORWARD EVER, BACKWARD NEVER!"*

And so it will be for us..... We are a church on the move, and God's strong hand has been apparent in our growth and development over the past years. By His grace and by the power of the Holy Ghost, as we humbly submit to His will, we will continue to take the saving message of His Love to all people.

I salute our dedicated clergy, Regional Deans, Priests and Deacons, our Mothers Union and Men's Guilds, our Youth and Servers Guilds, our Parish Councils and Churchwardens, our Chancellor and Diocesan Standing Committee, our excellent Vicar General Fr Augustine Koliti and dynamic evangelist Bishop Wellington Murinda, for their energy and commitment. Most of all, I salute you, the faithful men and women of the Traditional Anglican Church, for your dedication to God, your commitment to your church, and your constant prayers and support given to the work of the Gospel.

May our Risen Lord Jesus bless you and keep you.

*Archbishop Michael*  
*Metropolitan - TAC Province of Africa*  
*Bishop Ordinary - Pretoria and Southern Africa*