



FROM THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN

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Day of Reconciliation 2025

Dear Saints in the Diocese of Highveld

Re: Pastoral Letter to the Clergy and People of the Diocese of the Highveld

I write to you during the final week of Advent as we prepare to welcome Christmas—a time of new birth, renewed hope, and the assurance of God's enduring love. This love accompanies us individually and collectively, guiding us through all moments of our lives.

Our God breathes the same air we do here in the Highveld and beyond. He shares in our joys and sorrows, our disappointments and longings. He understands the daily challenges we face as the baptised who seek Him in diverse ways. This understanding is known as the incarnation, the embodiment of God through Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit. As we approach Christmas, let us also look forward to Epiphany, when we are invited to bring our gifts to Him and express our gratitude.

Over the past few years, the Diocese has been under considerable strain. Tensions and disagreements have surfaced, highlighting the challenges faced by the bishops. A task team led by Bishop Jo Seoka provided a report with recommendations for establishing an Intervention Task Team to carry forward these suggestions. The Intervention Task Team has begun its important work, and Bishop Charles is on sabbatical from December 14 until the completion of the team's work. All efforts are guided by Canon 21, reflecting our pastoral heart and our desire for the Diocese of Highveld to be a place of unity and reconciliation, while remaining true to our core mission of making Christ known, despite our current disagreements.

As we solemnly observe Advent, I encourage all our parishes in the Diocese to be sure to open their doors to celebrate peacefully and joyously together the birth of the Prince of Peace. Gathering together around the crib of Christ can be a healing act, a visible sign of goodwill, unity, and renewed trust. Please pray for yourselves, for Bishop Luke Pato, the chair, and the other members of the Intervention Task Team, and for our Province of Southern Africa. Remember to lift up Bishop Charles and his family, as well as all affected by our challenges.

As St. Teresa of Avila reminds us, "Even this will pass away," and as Paul states in 1 Thessalonians 5:24, "The God who calls you is faithful, and he will do this".

May you have a blessed Christmas and enter the Epiphany renewed. I pray the New Year brings blessings to God's church and to each of you.

Yours in the service of Christ,

+ Thabo Cape Town