

New Bishop for Lesotho

We are delighted to bring you news that, following a protracted selection process leading to intervention by the southern province, there is great joy that a new Bishop of Lesotho has been appointed. Revd. Canon Dr Vicenta Kgabe's ordination and installation will be on December 5th at the Cathedral of St Mary and St James, Maseru.

Born in Soweto, where she attended school, Bishop-elect Kgabe trained for the ministry at the College of the Transfiguration and earned a PhD in Practical Theology in 2011 from the University of Pretoria. The title of her dissertation thesis was "Abuse of alcohol by Anglican clergy: challenge to pastoral care?"



Revd. Canon Dr Vicenta Kgabe

Kgabe was made deacon in 2002 and was ordained a priest in 2003, then served parishes in and around Johannesburg. In 2013, she was appointed rector of the Parish of Weltevreden St Michael and All Angels. She was an archdeacon in the Diocese of Johannesburg, where she had responsibility for the promotion and discernment of vocations to the ordained ministry of the church.

In 2014 she was appointed rector of the College of the Transfiguration. Bishop-elect Kgabe, who is a member of the board for Hope Africa, will become the third woman bishop in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

We share below some of her reflections:

"This year on the 7th December I will be marking 15 years as an ordained priest in our church and the journey has been very interesting thus far. In 1992 I was 16 years old when I sensed a calling to the ordained and the first person I shared this yearning/sense of calling with was my grandmother who subsequently shared the news with my parish priest.

It was only when I completed Matric (Grade 12) aged 18 that my parish priest formerly talked with me about the process of ordination and later the parish council recommended me to be a member of the Fellowship of Vocation. My first FOV meeting coincided with my best friend wedding and I was part of her bridal party, that was the first of many tough decisions/ choices I was to make between church, family, and friends. I choose to attend the fellowship of vocation meeting and my best friend forgave me for bailing out on her at the last minute.....

I have cherished every leadership role that I have been granted by the church starting with being a Head Server to the current post as Rector of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa only remaining residential Theological College. And I have been taught about leadership and being a pastoral caregiver directly and indirectly.

What I know for sure is that I love God more than I love the church (the institution) and that knowledge has seen me through the challenging times in the ministry. What I can sight as .the lows of the journey is being judged superficially based on my age, race, and gender and having to continuously work triple hard to prove why me, why here and why now. My message to the upcoming leaders is that – you must be a team player, equip yourself with knowledge and skills, be a self-starter, ask for help – it’s a sign of strength and not weakness, love those in your care regardless. And never compromise your values and self, lastly laugh and play more.”

BISHOP ELECT GOES CANOEING WITH THE LINK

Fulfilling an early promise to visit the Lesotho Durham LINK in Maseru, Bishop elect Kgabe spent several hours with the staff at the start of November. It was an excellent visit, eliciting a very positive response to what the LINK in Lesotho is doing and encouraging Joseph in the work done through the Christian Education department. But it was not all talk...Bishop-elect Kgabe did not require much encouragement to get stuck in, going canoeing and abseiling at the centre. It has been said of her that “she has certainly broken stereotypes about women and men of the cloth being stiff and detached from worldly reality”, and her time at the LINK bore that out.

We pray for Bishop-elect Kgabe as she begins this new phase of her ministry and also for a mutually beneficial relationship, both between the Lesotho LINK and the diocese of Lesotho, and between the two ends of the Durham Lesotho LINK.



LINK SEEKS TO SERVE

Despite continuing restrictions due to Covid the staff at the LINK have been able to deliver some worthwhile ministry opportunities. Most significantly, because of the bitter divisions and struggles amongst the diocesan clergy regarding the appointment of a new bishop, the LINK offered to provide a two day conference for clergy on Reconciliation and Healing. This seems to have been particularly effective and greatly appreciated. Langham preaching seminars have continued with over 70 people, on 3 different levels, attending the seminars which prove to be really helpful to both lay and ordained ministers as they seek to share the gospel.

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