



Diocese of Johannesburg

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ANGLICAN BISHOP DIOCESE OF JOHANNESBURG



Our Vision is: To Achieve the Practice of the Ministry of All Believers

Pastoral Letter
Education
5 June 2020.

Lockdown. A word that until recently was not widely used in South African parlance. A word that often defined an area closed off because of a violent security threat. Yet the world today has a vivid understanding of what lockdown means. We play out its meaning each day in a seemingly endless drama in which we all have leading roles.

This coming Monday, 8 June 2020, sees those in our community who are involved in education change their roles in an important way; in a manner that will inevitably influence the course of the novel coronavirus and the disease whose name is another commonplace addition to our vocabulary.

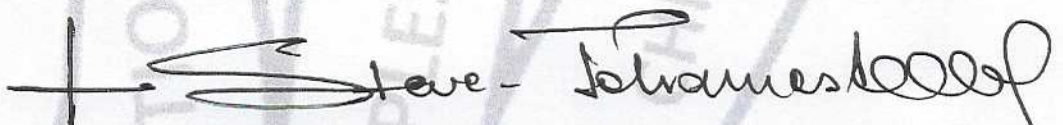
As teachers and learners, all other school workers and our Anglican chaplains resume their roles after more than two months of absence in our diocesan, church and other private and public schools, I wish to assure them of the prayers and support of the people called Anglican in the Diocese of Johannesburg.

Re-starting this interrupted academic year will be difficult. The coronavirus lockdown rudely reminded us about the reality of life itself. Staff and learners alike will still be coming to terms with this, for schools are a dynamic learning community. Now, however, they face the new reality of a continued lockdown in which they will work in close proximity with one another, even while practicing social distancing. Theirs is a daunting task that will require the utmost integrity and application. It is in their hands, as people who are involved in developing the new generation, that the future of a confident and enlightened South Africa lies.

A particular responsibility rests with our chaplains at Diocesan schools. In conversations during the lockdown with young people from our Diocese, I have heard time and again of how they are struggling to cope with this new reality; of how they miss their friends, communities and social interaction. I have listened to their uncertainty about this new future, and their fears as their families struggle to cope with many issues, not least of which may be loss of income. Chaplains and teachers alike will be called on to provide guidance and counsel to the young people as never before. They will need to be well prepared for this new challenge by themselves being spiritually prepared to do so.

Both our chaplains and teachers will need to be sensitive to young people and be willing to counsel them in a way that brings understanding of what we have all been through, and of the testing times yet to come. But we should remember to tell the stories of the dangers we have overcome, and our ability to win through. I urge them to bring their natural kindness and empathy to what they will be called to do.

Few generations of teachers have faced such a Herculean task. My prayers, and those of the Diocese, are with you all. God bless you.

 Steve - Johannes

The Rt Revd Dr Steve Moreo
Bishop of Johannesburg