# THE BISHOPS FOUNDATION Newsletter

## JUNE 2024 (1)

Dear Friends and Benefactors

Winter has duly arrived and has grabbed hold of us all with great force. Despite the weather many of us have a great deal to be grateful for. St Anthony of Padua reminds us to "Attribute to God every good that you have received. If you take credit for something that does not belong to you, you will be guilty of theft."

### *Catholic Bishops to political parties: "Work together for the good of the country"*

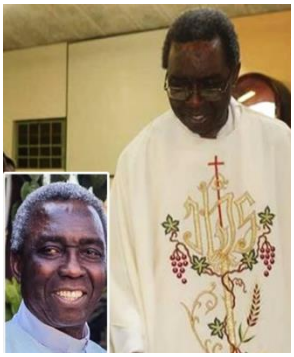
Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference

In their 'National Elections Results' joint statement, the Catholic Bishops congratulated the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) "for yet again demonstrating professionalism and efficiency in facilitating elections" in the country. "We also thank the political parties for their vigilance in noting some concerns during the voting process and the IEC's willingness to address these objections as provided by the Act governing the IEC,"

In the June 3 statement, the Bishops called on "all parties to avoid utterances and behaviour that could lead to acts of violence, destruction, and loss of life." "This includes making threats, inciting violence, or spreading false information that could escalate tensions,"

As political parties engage in coalition talks, the Bishops they are presented with an "unique opportunity for to work together for the good of the country, putting all ideologies aside…. politicians must focus on what needs to be done to serve the people who elected them and choose people for positions and roles according to their capacity and passion to carry out those tasks." (SACBC.org.za Sheila Pires Adapted)

### *Diocese of Francistown, Botswana*



Following the recent death of Bishop Anthony Rebello SVD the Holy Father has appointed Reverend Father Gabriel Lionel Afagbegee SVD Apostolic Administrator of Francistown Diocese. Before his appointment Fr. Afagbegee served as the Vicar General of the Diocese.

He is a member of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) and has previously served as the Provincial Superior of SVD, Parish Priest of San Salvador Catholic Church and Tlhatlogong Catholic Church, Director of Lumko Pastoral Institute and Kanamo Pastoral and Catechetical Centre. We hold him in prayer as he guides the diocese until a new Bishop is appointed.

### *St. Anthony of Padua—1195-1231 - 13 June*

St. Anthony of Padua is one of the most famous disciples of St. Francis of Assisi. He was a famous preacher and worker of miracles in his own day, and throughout the eight centuries since his death he has so generously come to the assistance of the faithful who invoke him.

**Prayer to St Anthony for lost things**

*St Anthony, perfect imitator of Jesus, who received from God the special power of restoring lost things, grant that I may find [name the item] which has been lost. Above all restore to me peace and tranquillity of mind, the loss of which has afflicted me even more than what I have lost.*

## *Winter*

Within the grip of winter, it is almost impossible to imagine the spring. The grey perished landscape is shorn of colour. Only bleakness meets the eye; everything seems severe and edged. Winter is the oldest season; it has some quality of the absolute. Yet beneath the surface of winter, the miracle of spring is already in preparation; the cold is relenting; seeds are wakening up. Colours are beginning to imagine how they will return. Then, imperceptibly, somewhere one bud opens, and the symphony of renewal is no longer reversible. From the black heart of winter, a miraculous, breathing plenitude of colour emerges.

Change arrives in nature when time has ripened. To change is one of the great dreams of every heart – to change the limitations, the sameness, the banality, or the pain. So often we look back on patterns of behaviour, the kind of decisions we make repeatedly and that have failed to serve us well, and we aim for a new and more successful path or way of living. But change is difficult for us. So often we opt to continue the old pattern, rather than risking the danger of difference.

At any time, you can ask yourself: At which threshold am I now standing? At this time in my life, what am I leaving? Where am I about to enter? What is preventing me from crossing my next threshold? What gift would enable me to do it?

Whatever comes, the great sacrament of life will remain faithful to us, blessing us always with visible signs of invisible grace. We merely need to trust. — From *To Bless the Space Between Us*, by John O'Donohue

## *Did you know?*

The Eucharistic celebration is the most common identifying factor among Catholics, frequently celebrated in sacramental memory of the saving activity of Christ and an expression of the unity of the Church. For this reason, each bishop has a responsibility in the Diocese he leads to ensure that the way the Eucharist is celebrated is in line with the universal norms, which include the elements used to celebrate the Eucharist, namely bread and wine. The bishops decided on a common wine that may be used in the whole Conference area, which is "Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference Mass Wine". This wine meets the Canonical requirements for use at Mass and is the official Mass wine in the SACBC area. The Mass wine can be ordered through the SACBC Website and will be delivered to the Parish or the Diocesan Chancery – sacbcwine.org.za

***The Pope's Intentions for June*** - For migrants fleeing their homes

We pray that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys full of danger and violence, find welcome and new opportunities in the countries that receive them.

*Thank you for your prayers and generosity towards the Foundation and the people whose lives that it touches.* *Blessings Fr Hugh*

We are formed by our environment and grace, by politics and prayer, by church and conscience. All God's creatures unite to teach us as well. We stumble. We stutter. We rise. We are lifted.

St Anthony of Padua