



22 July 2020

## **BISHOPS PASTORAL LETTER AND REFLECTION**

Dear Priests, Deacons, Religious, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Warm Greetings to you all. I write his pastoral letter and reflection with each one of you in my thoughts, heart and prayers during these cold days of winter.

In these challenging times of Covid-19. The life of our families and the family of the Church are facing very unusual and disturbing times. The normal has become un-normal. As the bishop reflects on the hardships of all, married couples, single people, families of many kind, the elderly, the youth and children I am with you.

The church the family of God cared for and loved by the Priests, Deacons, and Religious of the Diocese of Kroonstad are in the same situation and are with you. As the Government allowed for the opening of Church's in the time of Level 3, the Bishop in consultation with the Priests decided not to open out of concern for the health of all God's People in the Diocese of Kroonstad until further notice.

With schools that were allowed to open at different stages and now been called to close at the peak of the Coronavirus indicates the serious risk for all teachers and learners. Three of our final year Seminarians finished their studies at the end of June 2020. The five other seminarians will return to St John Vianney Seminary on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 if in line with the policy of the Education Department.

The thought and question in the Bishop's mind is how long can we keep the Church's closed in the Diocese? What about the spiritual and sacramental life of the People of God in the Diocese of Kroonstad? What seems certain about Covid-19 is going to be around for a long time until a vaccine is found.

What I want to share with you is that the Bishop will again consult with the Priests and Religious as to a way forward. After this I can communicate what we have decided. Please let me remind you that your family home and community is at the Domestic Church. Continue to pray and support each other as best you can. Please continue where you can to help your neighbour, your community with food. The Diocese of Kroonstad Development Agency, Caritas Kroonstad is assisting communities with food where funds are available.

I thank you all for caring about others. Living the commandment of 'Love one another as God loves us'. We are in these difficult times together. Let us pray for one another. Let us pray for healing in our world of Covid-19.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

*P. Holiday*  
Bishop Peter Holiday

