



*Anglican Church of Southern Africa*  
**Diocese of Grahamstown**

*The Bishop of Grahamstown*  
*The Rt Reverend Ebenezer St Mark Ntlali*

P O Box 181 • Grahamstown • South Africa • 6140 • email: [bishop@grahamstowndiocese.org.za](mailto:bishop@grahamstowndiocese.org.za)  
Tel. Home (+27) (0)46-622 2500 Office (+27) (0)46-636 1996 • Fax (+27) (0)46-622 5231

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***Special Ad Clerum***  
**6 September 2019**

**No. 04/2019**

Dear Diocesan Family

I greet you all in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

I am filled with great sadness when I reflect on what has been happening in our country over the last two weeks. The rape and violence against women and children as well as the violence against foreign members of our communities and looting of their shops are shocking.

As the Diocese of Grahamstown, we totally reject such behaviour, as it is against everything, we as Christians are called to be. These gender-based acts of violence are violations of God's Code of Conduct. God gave humanity a Code of Conduct in the Ten Commandments for us to obey in reverence to God and one another. In God's Code of Conduct we are given clear instructions of how to live with each other. Jesus simplified these commandments in teaching us that it is all about LOVE. We need to live in love towards each other and our environment – live in love towards all creation. We cannot say we love God and kidnap, hurt, rape, or kill our fellow citizens and members of our communities.

We remember with love and compassion Uyinene Mrwetyana, Amy Leigh, the four Mpungose children killed by their father. We all need to return to God anew. This behaviour is unacceptable.

As the Body of Christ, the Church of God, we cannot continue with business as usual. We therefore call on all our leadership in all parishes in the Diocese of Grahamstown to PAUSE during our services on Sunday, 8 September 2019. Have a special time of reflection and prayer and focus on:

- God's commandment to love
- The women and children who have died through senseless acts of violence and their families and loved ones who mourn and suffer
- Calling God's peace and love into our communities

We furthermore call on all men's organisations and guilds in our church to meet and put together a plan of action to address gender-based violence. Please forward your plans of action to the office. Love needs to be put into action in order for it to be effective. Also please let us not contribute to violence and fear through the sharing of fake news on social media platforms. Let us rather share God's love and God's peace.

Grace and peace

*+ Bishop Grahamstown*

BISHOP OF GRAHAMSTOWN

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**Christ has no body on earth but ours, no hands but ours, no feet but ours.  
Ours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion for the world is to look out;  
ours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good; and ours are the hands with  
which He is to bless us now. (St Teresa de Avila)**