

Saturday, 8 February 2020

## Archbishop urges learners to work for the common good

*The Installation of Mrs Shelley Frayne as Head of St Cyprian's School, St Cyprian's School Chapel, 7 February 2020*

*Readings: 1 Kings 3: 5-10; Psalm 18: 32-34, 48-52; Matthew 13: 44-52*

May I speak in the name of God who calls, informs and transforms us. Amen.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, dear family of St Cyprian's School, it is a joy to be with you this morning and celebrate this day – the installation of our new school head.

I extend a warm welcome to you all – parents, guardians and learners, and thank you for inviting me. A special welcome to Mrs Shelley Frayne, her husband Gary and Catherine their daughter as they join the St Cyprian's community. After spending nearly 11 years at DSG in Grahamstown, we welcome you back in Cape Town.

Thank you, the Revd Andrew Weiss, and all who worked tirelessly preparing for this service. Thank you also to the Chair of Council, Mr Hugo Nelson, for gracing this day.

The Book of Kings is presented in terms of God's relationship with Israel as a nation, and in particular with its leaders. Its purpose is to direct attention to the beginning of the monarchy, with all its high hopes and potential. Today's passage captures a narrative at a time when King David has retired into the background and Solomon is coming into prominence.

It is not hard to understand the pressure under which King Solomon must have been when he was asked to rule over the Israelites. At Gibeon, this prompted him to open his mind, body and soul before God as he prayed. When God invited him to make a request, he grabbed the moment with both hands and said: "...give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong". (1 Kings 3:9). Your school Council probably prayed a very similar prayer when you were looking for the successor to Mrs Redelinghuys – particularly given the competition that there is out there for good school principals.

Just as God gave Solomon the wisdom of discernment, I hope you will feel your prayers for a wise choice have been answered in the person of Mrs Frayne. At the beginning of his reign, King Solomon lacked experience when he assumed the responsibility of office. He knew that he would need God's help to lead the Israelites. Shelley, you do not lack experience but you too will nevertheless need assistance from God in order to advance his will for St Cyprian's School. As you take up your new responsibilities, Shelley, on behalf of the Diocese and the wider church, I bring you congratulations on your appointment.

As you all know this school seeks to challenge and inspire learners to intellectual

excellence through the curiosity and freedom of thought that builds character and promotes courage. To achieve that objective requires a discernment that produces good decisions based on divine principles. It is therefore our shared prayer and hope that you, together with your team, will discern the common good in whatever decisions you take in this school.

More than that, we rely on all of you – teachers, learners, and all staff – to learn here to work for the common good of all humanity. The concept of the common good is one which is rooted in God's desire that humans may flourish, each according to their own particular circumstances, and that all will have a liveable standard of material well-being. In its widest sense, a society organised for the common good is one which is stable, safe and just, a society which accords everyone respect materially, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually.

Today's Gospel passage stresses the infinite worth of God's kingdom. The two parables we heard in that reading teach us that the kingdom is of such great value that we should be willing to give up all that we have in order to gain it – it is a kingdom for which any sacrifice is not too great. We also learn that recognising the kingdom involves recognising and drawing a distinction between the good and the bad, the new and the old. This is the Lord's business.

And God chastens us in order to correct our faults. His discipline is evidence that we are his children. Far from being a reason for despair, discipline is a basis for encouragement and perseverance. Received in the right spirit, discipline provides a framework for wholesome and beneficial individual and corporate lives. Looking beyond the school and school life, discipline lays down the basis of succeeding in the world for which you are being prepared. Discipline is part of life, and divine discipline is superior, is always imposed in the interest of all humanity and aims to make us share in the very holiness of God Himself.

Part of establishing that framework in which we can grow and flourish both at school and beyond involves creating an environment in which you can cope with the challenges you face as young women today. We in the Anglican Church have paid special attention to developing what we call the Safe Church initiative, which is designed to protect people – and especially women and girls – from abuse and exploitation, whether in our parishes or in church schools. This involves protecting you – and showing you how to protect yourselves – from abuse, violence and behaviour that is not wholesome, whether in consenting relationships or not. It involves helping you to learn how to deal with the pressures society will bring to bear on you – pressures to chase after material things, pressures to put others down instead of building them up, pressures to put yourself ahead of your responsibilities to the community.

The Church's vision and mission requires us to be involved in education and nurturing the young in order to be transformed ourselves and to transform the society around us. But if we are to transform our country in accordance with the common good, we need our schools to reflect the diversity of the society in which we live, and therefore I hope that you as the St Cyprian's family will intensify your efforts to do this.

As I conclude, I wish once again to congratulate you, Mrs Frayne, on your

appointment, and as I install you in this office I pledge my support for your ministry. You all know by now that education is at the centre of my heart.

God loves all of you and so do I. Amen

Posted by [Anglican Media Office, Bishopscourt](#) at 16:49 

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