

DIOCESE OF KITUI



FROM THE ARCHBISHOP'S DESK

My dear Christians of Kitui,

My dear Daughters and Sons in Christ,

May Our Lord Jesus, born in Bethlehem, Praised be now and for ever!!

“Where is the infant king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.”... Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And suddenly the star they had seen rising went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. (Mat. 2, 5, 9-11)

As we enter into the period of Christmas, and prepare for the new year, our mind and heart goes in search of the one who gives meaning to our lives. “Where is the infant King of the Jews?” Where is the eternal King of the Universe, we wish to come and adore him!

My dear Daughters and Sons, the program of our entire life should be to “seek Christ”, to welcome him into our hearts and lives, and to let him direct our entire life. We are invited to make our hearts better places for his dwelling through repentance, confession and washing of our sins, and the decorations of the beauty of our good actions, our virtues or our intentions, however insignificant.

Today unfortunately, society has overturned the priorities and focus of our life, even our christian life. The environment urges us to seek earthly Kings like Herod, earthly glory and wealth. Christmas has been turned to a time to show off our wealth, or to buy things for ourselves, to fill our selves with the empty noise, pleasure of overeating and overdrinking. Like the people in the Inn when Mary and Joseph entered Bethelhem, many are unable to recognise the Saviour of the World, the King of the Universe as he passed by their door.

Jesus is calling out to you! He is asking for space in your life, your plans and in your heart. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens

“So that we may be Holy”

the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3, 20)

This Christmas, as we contemplate the Love of God, who does not mind being born in the poorest cave among animals, in the cold and the rejection of men, we must truly discover again what it means to kneel before the King of the Universe. We should not fear to be seen kneeling before our King, in our public life. We must kneel like the wise men, to invite him into this rotten world, in order to cure it, and bring the joy of the angels, and the glory of God. “And all at once with the angel there was a great throng of the hosts of heaven, praising God with the words: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace for those who have won His favour.” (Luke 2, 13-14)

Christmas must change us! The voice of one crying in the desert must make us change! The people, lawyers, tax collectors, soldiers, asked John the Baptist, “What must we do then?” And his answer: do right, reject the reign of “lies and untruth”, return to be again a subject of the King...

“Anyone who has two tunics must share with the one who has none, and anyone with something to eat must do the same.’ There were tax collectors, too, who came for baptism, and these said to him, ‘Master, what must we do?’ He said to them, ‘Exact no more than the appointed rate.’ Some soldiers asked him in their turn, ‘What about us? What must we do?’ He said to them, ‘No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay’”. (Luke 3, 10-15).

Today as on those times, we need to hear the invitation to a true conversion!

Christ knocks in the hearts of unscrupulous Christians, who sell their Christian birthright, to obtain favours through bribery, or encouraging corruption in our offices and workplaces. Only a sincere Christian acting can give us happiness!

Christ knocks in the heart of Parliaments and of elected leaders, currently obsessed in amassing their wealth, increasing their salaries at the expense of “Jesus, the poor child born in Bethlehem”. Remember the Evil Council of the Sanhedrin condemned Christ saying, “it is better for one man to die for a People”, justifying why Christ should be killed...

Christ knocks in the hearts of our business people, and those who have been blessed with earthly possessions, who spend luxuriously, and only let the widows, the poor and sick around them eat what falls from their tables. He invites you to use his “blessings” to change this world with him through improving the welfare of those in need...

Christ knocks in the hearts of our Policemen, our enforcers of law, who are in a hurry to put “Jesus”, in the form of poor defenseless, innocent Kenyans, into “Herod's jail”. Just like John the Baptist, they mistreat them because they cannot bribe or condone their evil practices; or through a miscarriage of Justice, like the daughter of Herodias, allow those who ask for “the head of John the Baptist”, just because of the fear of opinions of the powerful... Do not be afraid to do good and stand for what is just!

Christ knocks in the hearts of bishops, priests and religious, to truly reach out to the people of God. To shun the craving for wealth and to imitate Christ in his humility, and

readiness to die for all, without discrimination.... “The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep”.

Christ knocks in the heart of the young people, today so easily attracted by passing pleasures, by false promises of happiness; who are being seduced by immodesty and immorality, and whose time is being eaten away by the empty digital world. Christ wishes to entrust the Church to you as he did, to the young Apostles... You must become “Strong in Faith”.

Christ knocks in the doors of our families, so that we can defend life, defend the children and elderly from abuses of all sorts. He knocks because he wishes to be born there, through the generosity of the families, who do not fear the “blessings of children”. He wishes to ask you to open the door through the celebration of Sacrament of Marriage in the Church.

Let him in! Let us all allow Christ to shine and be seen when we live up to our call as Christians. Let us not continue to shame this beautiful name of “Christian”, “Catholic”... What use is it to be called a Christian or Catholic Lawyer, Christian teacher, or Catholic Politician, if we have closed Christ outside! When our behaviour shows we do not “have Christ” nor has he found any space in my mind, heart and actions?

The birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ makes us rediscover the beauty of our Christianity, and the need to renew the power of our response. Our Lord will give us the strength, if we truly let him inside our lives. He needs us to offer him the gifts of our heart, our plans, and our skills.

My dear Christians. We have also made huge efforts to offer him our resources in our recent Family day. I sincerely wish to thank you all for your generosity, and the wonderful turn up on the Family day celebration. It makes us feel one family as we offer God some fruits of his blessings, for the efforts of Evangelization and the building of his Church. Thank you once more! May the Lord bless you all abundantly.

Finally, in October 2018, I was blessed to represent our Bishops conference in the Synod in Rome on the youth. These were wonderful days spent near Pope Francis, and listening to the concern of the Church for the young people. We wish to tell young people that we place our trust in them, and that we want to fully support them. They have space in the Church to play their role and help us with their youthful spirit. As they grow and learn, they, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, can grow to be responsible in spite of their age, showing the vigour of their Christianity in many ways. Encouraged by Pope Francis, we want to spend as much time with you and also listening to you. In so doing, we ask you to come to us, so that we can assist you blossom and also guide you in the difficult environment of today, as your mentors and friends. I am glad that the youth in our Diocese have taken seriously their faith, and indeed have shown it is truly alive: “faith on fire!” Let us keep this momentum in the many activities. Be courageous as Mary was, to answer the Call of God when you hear it: “do not be afraid!” I pray that the Lord may choose from among you, like he chose Mary when she was still very young, many young men and women to serve him. He chose Mary and Joseph in their youth, and so too, John and many young saints in History.

Allow me to remind you of our project of Our Lady of Protection Museve Shrine. We thank God that we have been able to make good progress and we have already roofed the Church. I am now asking you to pray so that we can get the remaining funds to complete our Shrine. It is looking very beautiful! Please find some time to come pray and see it. To the young people, I am asking you to donate one working day to help level the grounds and build the paths. We hope we can complete the Church by April 2019. I am asking individual Christian, Families and Small Christian Communities, to pledge a pew in the Church. We have placed each at KShs 25,000. The name or dedication will be engraved on the pew. We will collect the names at the parish level.

My dear Daughters and Sons, as we prepare to begin the New Year, we have to decide to walk with Christ on every step, carrying him in our hearts. He will bless our plans and our efforts, he will grant us Joy and Happiness, Peace and Harmony in our lives, our families and even in our Church.

May the new born Child, Jesus Christ bless you this Christmas from the arms of his Blessed Mother!!

Your Loving Shepherd,



✠ Anthony Muheria
Apostolic Administrator, Kitui Diocese.

16th December 2018, Third Sunday of Advent.