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The social teaching of the catholic bishops and other christians leaders in Zambia. Major pastoral letters and statements. 1953-2001

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b) The rules of openness and fairness laid down by the Electoral Commission must be strictly observed. In particular the communications media should be equally available to campaigners of both one-party and multi-party systems.

c) An up-to-date registration of voters should be held prior to the referendum, or National registration cards should be accepted as sufficient identification for voting. This should be done to ensure that basic justice is achieved in allowing the maximum number of our citizens to vote in this all-important referendum.

d) A very clear explanation of what is being voted on in the referendum must be given to the people. For example, a vote to retain the one-party system does not mean a blanket endorsement of the present structure and operation of the Party, nor does a vote for a multi-party system mean endorsement of tribal divisions. Moreover, the precise wording of the referendum and the meaning of the voting symbols used should be clarified, since we feel there is presently the serious possibility of misunderstanding on the part of many voters.

e) In order to ensure the fair outcome of the referendum, ballot boxes should be properly supervised during the voting process as well as during the counting of votes by supporters of both sides. Adequate steps should be taken immediately to guarantee a very efficient, free and fair voting process.

f) To promote an environment of free debate and to ensure greater justice for all participants, the state of emergency in the Country should be lifted.

Commitments For Church Action

i) We instruct all parishes throughout the Country to make known this Pastoral Statement and the moral obligation of all our citizens to exercise their rights of citizenship in a conscientious manner.

ii) In view of the widespread political apathy of so many, we urge those involved in Church educational programmes to assist people to understand the issues and to weigh them in the light of the Church's social teaching. (Education materials will be provided.)

iii) Finally, in order to ask God's blessing on this momentous undertaking we call upon all members of the Catholic Church to make this period a time of prayer. We encourage each one to pray for wisdom and courage to make the right decisions, not only in the referendum, but also in all public actions in order to better promote the rights of our people and especially the cause of justice for the poor.

Lusaka, 23rd July 1990

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

Rt. Rev. Dennis de Jong (Chairman)	Bishop of Ndola
Rt. Rev. T-G Mpundu	Bishop of Mbala
Rt. Rev. Medardo Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Rt. Rev. Raymond Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Rt. Rev. Abdon Potani OFM Conv.	Bishop of Solwezi
Rt. Rev. James Spaita	Bishop of Mansa
Rt. Rev. James Corboy S.J.	Bishop of Monze
Rt. Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka

***NOTE:** Since this letter was written the date of the Referendum has been changed to 13th August 1991.



The Catholic Bishops of Zambia - 2002

THE THIRD REPUBLIC 1991....



... A time of renewed hope in democracy and economic development. This was also the period in which the former President, Frederick Chiluba, tried to go for a third term in office... But the Church stood up strong against him!

“YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES”

**Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia
to mark 100 years of Catholic Faith in Zambia
1891 – 1991
9th July 1991**

YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES: EVANGELISATION FOR THE SECOND CENTURY

“You Shall be My Witnesses” is a statement of the Risen Lord taken from Acts 1:8. They are words said by Christ to his disciples before he ascended to heaven. The bishops of Zambia saw in these words a starting point for reflecting on the meaning of witnessing to Christ in the present situation of Zambia. They were convinced that these words of Christ are still relevant to the Church in Zambia as a witness of Christ. The bishops noted that as the Church in Zambia begins the second century of Christianity with a growing maturity, blessed by its past and challenged by the future, it should move away from being a Mission Church dependent on other Churches and become a truly Zambian Church.

The bishops noted that during the first 100 years of Christianity the Catholic Church in Zambia has achieved a lot in providing education, medical care and other development services. It has exercised its prophetic ministry in pastoral Statements, establishing a dynamic and healthy Church-State relationship, and good ecumenical co-operation. Other achievements mentioned are: the involvement of the laity in the ministry of the Church, development of Zambian Church music, establishment of Small Christian Communities, and increased numbers of vocations to the priesthood and to religious life.

However, the bishops warn that: “we should not feel too self-satisfied or complacent. We are aware of our sins and failings, of being weak and limited human beings, in need of God’s grace. Improvements are indeed required in many areas, e.g. in our personal relationship with God our Father and his Son Jesus; in the life of our Christian communities; in the relationship of faith and culture and to the society in which we live.”

The bishops then speak about the challenges of evangelisation in the second century of Christianity in Zambia. The following challenges are mentioned: proclamation and Ministries, inculturation, liberation, justice and peace. Some themes of special concern are also given such as: the family, women, youth and the crisis of AIDS. After describing each challenge of evangelisation and themes of special concern there are questions that are meant to be seriously considered by the readers of the pastoral letter. Therefore this letter was a call, not only to note the challenges of the Christian faith in the second century of Christianity but also to do something to make evangelisation in all its aspects a reality.

INTRODUCTION

1. “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8).
2. These challenging words of Jesus are addressed to us today in Zambia. When they were spoken first to the disciples, the Christian Church began to grow. The Church continues to grow to this day, and we Christians in Zambia joyfully play our part.
3. Because of this challenge, dedicated men and women came to Zambia one hundred years ago to witness to the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ. These were the first missionaries. They followed the steps of the apostles and answered the call of Christ (Luke 5: 1-11) in sharing the Good News. The generous response to this Good News

sprang from their own strong traditional belief in the creative presence and action of God in their life. They began collaborating in the task of evangelisation. Today, because of this challenge, our Catholic Church in Zambia continues to witness to the same Good News.

4. As we begin the second century of Christianity in Zambia we feel called upon to reflect on the meaning of witness to Jesus in the present situation of our beloved Country. In 1993, the African Synod (the "Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops") will be convened. It will explore the theme of the Church's evangelising mission as we move toward the year 2000. Following the challenge of Jesus, we know that the primary form of evangelisation is witness in word and deed⁷⁷. Others shared with us the Good News by the message they brought to us and by the lives they lived with us. We are now called to do the same today.

5. As the Catholic Church in Zambia, we have arrived at a very important moment. We begin our second century with a growing maturity, blessed by our past and challenged by our future. We move away from being a Mission Church, generously served for many years from Europe, North America and Asia, to become a truly Zambian Church, taking our place within the Regional Church of Africa and the Universal Church. We do this with a great trust in Our Lord, who promised us: "I am with you all days until the end of the world" (Mt 28: 20).

⁷⁷ Synod of Bishops, Special Assembly for Africa, *The Church in Africa and Her Evangelisation Mission towards the Year 2000: "You Shall Be My Witnesses,"* (Acts 1:18), No. 15. John Paul II, *The Mission of Christ* ("Redemptoris Missio"), 1990, No. 42.

History

6. The first hundred years of evangelisation here in Zambia have been marked by many instances of God's loving care. We have experienced these blessings from the opening of the first Catholic parish by the White Fathers in Mambwe Mwela in 1891, followed by the coming of the Jesuits to Chikuni in 1905, and the later service of many other congregations of priests, sisters and brothers.

7. When we joyfully celebrated the visit of Pope John Paul II to our Country in May 1989, we recalled with deep gratitude the wonderful work of the early missionaries who, in the words of the Pope during his Mass in Kitwe, "sowed the seeds of faith which you are privileged to make your own and in turn to hand on to the next generation."⁷⁸

8. The achievements of our Zambian Catholic Church have been occasions of great grace for our Christian community and for all the people of our Country as can be seen from the following:

i) the establishment of an extensive educational system; the provision of medical care through Church - sponsored hospitals and clinics, and special services to the handicapped and orphans; the extension of development and relief services, especially among the urban and rural poor;

ii) the exercise of our prophetic ministry through the publication of pastoral statements; the development of a tradition of dynamic and healthy Church and State relationships; the good ecumenical relations and cooperation we have enjoyed with our Christian brothers and sisters;

⁷⁸ John Paul II, Talks Given by Pope John Paul II during His Visit to Zambia, May 2-4, 1989, p. 16.

iii) the increased involvement of the laity in all the many aspects of the Church's ministry; the development of Zambian liturgical music; the establishment Small Christian Communities (SCC) throughout the Country;

iv) the opening of seminaries and religious communities with increased numbers of Zambian seminarians and religious men and women; the setting up of Church structures and the appointment of Zambian bishops to head dioceses.

9. And yet we should not feel too self-satisfied or complacent. We are aware of our sins and failings, weak and limited human beings, always in need of God's grace. Improvements are indeed required in many areas, e.g., personal relationships with God our Father and his son Jesus; the life of our Christian communities; the relationship of our faith to our culture and to the society in which we live.

10. The parables of the Gospel and the life of our Lord and his apostles teach us that the seed of God's Kingdom grows slowly and in order to bear fruit that seed must die. This is the normal process of Christian development. Hence we should not be discouraged by difficulties but, on the contrary, realise with St. Paul that "when I am weak, then I am strong". (2 Cor. 12:10)

11. As we look confidently ahead to the next hundred years, we can see that our central task as Church is to deepen and expand the work of evangelisation in a spirit of faithful continuity and daring creativity. The Holy Spirit, who was at work in the apostles and in those who heard them, gives us the ability to undertake this task with boldness, energy and enthusiasm. (Acts 2:29; 4:13,29,31; 9:27-28)

Challenge Of Evangelisation

12. As we begin the second century of Christian evangelisation, we must urgently ask ourselves what should be the priorities for the Church's continuing mission. We can learn much by reflecting on the ways in which we have experienced the Good News over the years. We have learned the truths of our faith, especially through catechetical and liturgical instructions and a prayer study of the Bible. We have tried to adapt the expression of our faith to our African way of life. And we have responded to the demands of our faith in our loving service to others in society.

13. These lived experiences, namely proclamation, inculturation and liberation, are central to the evangelisation described by Paul VI in his 1975 Letter, *Evangelisation Today*; John Paul II *The Mission of Christ*; and in the preparatory documents for the African Synod. These are indeed the challenges of evangelisation for the second century.

14. In order that we may be faithful and effective witnesses to Jesus here in Zambia today, we invite all our Church members to join us in asking serious questions about how we are responding to these three challenges. Together we need to take action to move forward.

Proclamation and Ministries

15. Evangelisation is essentially the clear proclamation of Jesus Christ as Saviour of the world.⁷⁹ We Christians must continue to proclaim this consoling message "in season and

⁷⁹ Paul VI, *Evangelisation Today* ("Evangelii Nuntiandi"), 1975, No. 27.

out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2) as our greatest gift to Zambia. It is a message of hope, communicated through scriptures, affected through sacrament, celebrated in liturgy, and witnessed to in life. This task of proclamation is the responsibility of the entire Church, the People of God.

16. To give effective witness in our proclamation of Jesus, we need to give the Biblical apostolate our top priority in our mission of evangelisation.⁸⁰ We are truly encouraged that the Scriptures are so deeply appreciated by our people. Recognising that the Bible belongs to the whole Church; we urge that study should be further promoted within our Small Christian Communities. Special attention should be given to the power of the Word to enrich our spiritual life and motivate our social action. Prayerful meditation on the Bible shapes our vision of life and makes our existence more meaningful. In our difficult and uncertain present times, let us root our life of faith more deeply in the soil of God's Word.

17. The Church in Zambia is strong because of the grace of an active and dedicated laity. Working closely with priests and religious, the laity have taken on many important responsibilities. For example, they serve as catechists, prayer leaders, voluntary catechisers, youth animators, leaders and members of Small Communities, organisations and movements and officials in parish, diocesan and National offices. Hence we are pleased and encouraged to note this witness given by increasing numbers of our laity, including many youth. They have taken up the task of sharing the Good News with their neighbours, both through Church activities and through their ordinary lives in family, work and school.

⁸⁰ *The Church in Africa*, No. 32.

18. We are furthermore grateful to God for the growing numbers of Zambian priests and religious, as well as for the continued presence of missionaries and lay volunteers from many different countries, including some from within Africa itself. These give strong witness to the Gospel message of universal partnership in the service of the Kingdom. The Zambian Sisterhoods are a clear sign of hope for the future, offering exemplary service in parishes, schools, hospitals and development work. The recruitment, formation and support of seminaries must be a high priority for us, as well as the on-going formation and support of our own priests.

Questions

19. As we face this on-going task of proclamation, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

i) Can we evaluate what impact evangelisation has had on our society during the past one hundred years?

ii) What more can we do to involve a greater number of lay people in the proclamation of the Good News in the wider society; to render liturgical celebrations more meaningful and related to our daily lives; and to strengthen the membership, life and leadership of Small Christian Communities?

iii) Given the current needs of our Country, how relevant is the formation received by our future Zambian priests and religious? How can we better give them the spiritual, moral and material support, which they need?

iv) How can we improve the attitude of our Catholic parents toward vocations among their children to the priesthood and religious life?

v) As the number of missionaries is decreasing, are we ready to accept greater responsibilities? Are missionaries

themselves ready to take only a supportive role? What steps are we taking to increase the material self-reliance of our Church?

vi) Are we making sufficient use of the means of social communications - press, radio, television - in the process of evangelisation?

Inculturation

20 The second challenge of evangelisation is what is today called the "inculturation" of the faith. This is the task of making Christianity in all its aspects our own, truly African. Just as with the birth of Jesus the Word of God was incarnated in a specific culture, so today, this Word needs to be incarnated here in our culture. As Pope Paul VI emphasised, evangelisation will not be effective "if it does not take into consideration the actual people to whom it is addressed, if it does not use their language, their signs and symbols, if it does not answer the questions they ask and it does not have an impact on their concrete lives".⁸¹

21. The early missionaries were people of their own time, culture and mentality. Tireless and dedicated, they planted the faith and established the Church.

But they may not always have been sufficiently sensitive to some positive aspects of our traditions. For us today, the task is to promote more effectively both the hard research and the active practice required for an authentically Zambian expression of our Catholic faith. We applaud the efforts already begun in this task, for example in the celebration of our liturgy. But further work needs to be done, so that we can witness to Christ in all

81 *Evangelisation Today*, No. 63.

aspects of liturgy, prayer and theology. As urged by John Paul II in his recent letter on missions, we bishops commit ourselves to provide discernment and encouragement in this work of inculturation.⁸²

22. But there is another important aspect of inculturation which must be emphasised. This is what Pope Paul VI referred to as the "evangelisation of culture." This means the Gospel's message is brought to bear directly on the values, norms and customs of a particular culture.⁸³ The "two-edged sword" of the living Word of God (Hebrews 4:12) will, on the one hand, purify and affirm the positive values of our society, such as the importance given to religion and to a community spirit. On the other hand, it will criticise and discard those values, which are negative, such as superstition and witchcraft.

23. In recent years, we have experienced an erosion of the value of authentic Christian humanism, as capitalism undercuts social solidarity and "scientific socialism" demeans human dignity. Moreover, the values of our traditional society have suffered from the consequences of increased urbanisation, the impact of economic hardships that affect especially the family, and the problem of unemployment, particularly of the youth. The generation gap heightened by different educational experiences, often mean the young people do not pay attention to the wisdom of their elders and older people neglect the insights of the young.

24. All too often, socially negative influences shape our attitudes and behaviour. Among these are the values communicated by some programmes offered on television, usually foreign. Moreover, the example given by some political

⁸² *The Mission of Christ*, No. 52

⁸³ *Evangelisation Today*, Nos. 19-20

and business leaders is not always edifying. Nor is the preaching of the Church always relevant. As a consequence, we see an increase in our culture of competition and materialism, of individualism and selfishness, of corruption and dishonesty. Surely in our sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ, we have something more precious, more worthwhile and more humanizing to offer to our Zambian brothers and sisters today.

Questions

25. To meet this second challenge of evangelisation, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

- i) Do our people really feel at home in the Catholic Church today in Zambia?
- ii) What aspect of our traditional arts, symbols, rites, teachings, prayer etc., should be reaffirmed and how should this be done?
- iii) How can we, as Church communities, commit and organise ourselves to deal with the problems arising from some cultural beliefs, traditions and practices, such as witchcraft, spirit possession, and inheritance customs affecting widows?
- iv) What values do we see emerging in our culture today and how do we evaluate them in the light of the Gospel? What are we doing in our families to communicate authentic Christian values?
- v) What values have most influence on our young people and where do these values come from? What can our Christian communities do to help bridge the generation gap?

Liberation, Justice and Peace

26. The third challenge of evangelisation for Zambia's future emphasises very clearly the intimate connection between the Gospel and the personal and social life we live in the real world. For this reason, evangelisation necessarily involves a message about human dignity and rights, family life, justice and peace, economics and politics and true integral development. Human liberation is central to the Good News.⁸⁴

27. We have attempted to respond to this specific challenge of evangelisation. Four years ago we joined with our brothers and sisters of the Christian Council of Zambia and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, in issuing the document entitled "Christian Liberation, Justice and Development."⁸⁵ Although this statement was written in a very different political context, most of what we said at that time stands today as a relevant message. Last year, at a critical moment in our history, we issued a Pastoral Statement on "Economics, Politics and Justice."⁸⁶ The basic principles outlined in this document remain valid even as we have entered the era of multi-party politics.

28. As we make an earnest effort today to "read the signs of the times" in Zambia (Matthew 16:1-3), we recognise the serious suffering of our people. Along with the rest of Africa, Zambia's economic situation is indeed painful. It is the poor among us who experience that pain most intensely. Rising prices of basics (food and shelter), decline of

⁸⁴ *Evangelisation Today*, No. 29

⁸⁵ Christian Council of Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, and Zambia Episcopal Conference, *Christian Liberation, Justice and Development: The Church's Concern for Human Development in Zambia*, 1987.

⁸⁶ Zambia Episcopal Conference, *Economics, Politics and Justice*, 1990.

social services (education and health care), decay of physical infrastructure (roads, transport, communications), damage to the environment (pollution, deforestation): these and many more socioeconomic problems face us daily.

29. In responding to these problems, we can find guidance in Catholic Social Teaching, the one hundredth anniversary of which we celebrate this year.⁸⁷ As we move into the new situation of the Third Republic, we urge all members of the Church to reflect on the relevance of the basic principles and guidelines of Catholic Social Teaching. These teachings, which apply to any and all Governments and parties, include:

- i) fundamental respect for the dignity and rights of all human persons
- ii) a special concern for the poor in society
- iii) the role of the State in promoting the common good
- iv) political participation and accountability
- v) economic justice and the private property
- vi) respect for the environment and integrity of creation
- vii) promotion of peace

30. Central to the social teaching of the Church is emphasis on human rights. As we stressed in the recent contribution of our Church to the Constitutional Commission, the political and civil rights of the individuals should not be isolated from their economic and social rights.⁸⁸ The list of these rights is found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations and in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. Both

⁸⁷ John Paul II, The Hundredth Anniversary of "*Rerum Novarum*," ("*Centesimus Annus*"), 1991.

⁸⁸ Bishop Dennis H. de Jong, Chairman of the Zambia Episcopal Conference, Mr. Fidelis Kapoka and Mrs. Emmah Chibesakunda, representing the National Council of Laity, Submission to the Zambia Constitutional Commission, 16 January, 1991, p. 3.

documents have been endorsed by the highest Church authority and ratified by the Zambian Government. As we move towards our Third Republic let us remember that the rights to food, shelter, clothing, health, medical care, work under good conditions and just remuneration are as fundamental as the basic freedoms of expression, conscience, movement and assembly.

31. Mindful of what Pope John Paul II has referred to as the Church's "preferential option for the poor,"⁸⁹ we add our voices to those who decry the increasing hardships experienced by the rural and urban poor. We urge that special concern be shown towards them as economic restructuring goes on in Zambia. In particular, we call for close monitoring of the Social Action Programme in order to assure those in greatest need.

32. As regards our Nation's political situation, we appreciate the peace and security that we have enjoyed during the first quarter century of our independence. We now welcome the reintroduction of multi-party politics. It gives all citizens a better chance to take part in decision-making. Political competition will allow for a greater accountability on the part of our leaders.

33. However, as we approach the elections we must express concern regarding the frequent instances of intolerance, intimidation and lust for power. We call upon the leadership and militants of all political parties to avoid distorted presentations of the situation in our Country. Responsible politics demands a fair assessment of the Nation's history, of its present state and of what can reasonably be expected for the coming years. We need to remember the lesson: "The truth will set you free" (Jn. 8:32).

⁸⁹ John Paul II, *The Social Concerns of the Church* ("Sollicitudo Rei Socialis"). 1987, No. 42.

34. In the present atmosphere of fierce competition and character assassination, we remind the Nation of the noble goals of political activity. From a Christian point of view, politics aims at the promotion of the common good and the service of all the people. We read in the scriptures "The Son of Man himself came not to be served but to serve" (Mark 10:42). Political debates should concentrate on programmes to improve the life of the Nation rather than on personality issues. There is an urgent need for understanding, dialogue and reconciliation.

Questions

35. In order to promote the liberation, justice and peace which are central to evangelisation, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

i) Do we Catholics really believe that the promotion of liberation, justice and peace are central to our faith? How can we give as much priority to this task as we do to other Church activities?

ii) Do we educate our Catholic communities to understand the close link between faith, justice and peace, and to help know the riches of the Church's social teaching?

iii) What can we do as individual Christians and as Church to promote a just economy, which serves the needs of all people and is especially sensitive to the poor?

iv) What can we do to promote political participation, reconciliation and fairness in the coming elections?

v) From a Christian point of view, how should we evaluate the competing political ideologies: capitalism, liberalism, scientific socialism, democratic socialism, humanism and nationalism?

SOME SPECIAL CONCERNS

36. We feel at this time that evangelisation which is linked to human advancement⁹⁰ must pay particular attention to four topics, which present serious challenges to us: family, women, youth, and the crisis of AIDS.

The Family

37. The family is the heart of our Nation and our Church. It plays a particularly privileged role in our own culture, in nurturing, educating, protecting and sustaining several generations. But economic hardships, increased urbanisation, and the breakdown of traditional patterns have today caused serious family difficulties. These are seen in the rising rate of divorce, the prevalence of abortion, the problems among youth such as theft, street crimes, dagga smoking and prostitution.

38. Promotion of the family and protection of the sacredness of family life must, therefore, be a high national priority. While maintaining the basic right of parents to decide freely the number of their children, we recognise that population growth should be balanced with the rate of development of our resources. We therefore, remind all of the duty of responsible parenthood and of the demands of the moral law. We appreciate that national policies make provision for those who wish to make use of the natural methods of child spacing and call upon Catholics to use these methods which respect human love and sexuality. We deplore the fact that some people are advocating that legal abortion should become more easily available and that contraceptives be given but indiscriminately.

⁹⁰ *Evangelisation Today*, No. 31.

39. In our pastoral efforts, the Church pledges even stronger support for families, beginning with local parish programmes such as marriage preparation and enrichment courses, marriage encounter, family life education, etc.

Questions

40 To assist the family, we must seek to give answers to questions such as the following:

i) How relevant is the Church teaching about family life to the real problems, which parents are facing today?

ii) What are the key family problems, which the Church should be addressing, and how should we go about solving them?

Women

41. Zambian women are the backbone of our families and play major roles in our economy, especially in rural areas. Yet in many instances women are treated in ways, which deny our fundamental Christian belief in the basic equality of human beings, a belief founded in the biblical revelation that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27).

42. The oppression of women in the family, the injustices done to widows, the high incidence of female illiteracy, the exploitation of women for sexual favours, the violence done to women: all these are signs of denial of basic human rights, an injustice which cries out to our Creator. We urge the Government to take stronger action to promote the rightful development of women in Zambia. One effective strategy towards achieving that goal would be to promote equal opportunity for women

to be represented at decision-making levels. We also pledge Church action to educate our members to a more correct view of women and to actively redress the injustices done to women in Church, State and family life.

Questions

43. Questions such as the following need to be addressed by all of us with honesty and determination:

i) Are women treated justly in families, work places, public life and the Church? If not, why not? How can we address specific instances of injustice, e.g., the treatment of widows?

ii) What should Church do to promote greater justice for women and better opportunities for their involvement in decision-making in all sectors of society and of the Church?

Youth

44. Zambia is a young Nation: at least 50% of our population is now under the age of 15. This is a source of great vitality and promise for the future. But it also presents us with a serious responsibility. Can we adequately educate our youth to move into an uncertain future? Can we find sufficient jobs to enable them to be self-reliant? Can we provide them with realistic opportunities to become conscientious participants in our society? Can we give them hope in the future?

45. Education of our youth is surely one of the most critical challenges facing our Nation today. In the belief that any national policy must be evaluated on the basis of what it will mean for the future of our youth, we urge as a number one national priority the improvement of schools. Programmes, which emphasise skill-education, should not

simply be talked about but actually implemented. Budget increases should be proportionately shared between salaries and the provision of resources. Something must be done to stem the alarming exodus of qualified Zambian teachers to more attractive employment conditions in other sectors and in neighbouring countries.

46. In many parts of the Nation today, the Church is providing special training programmes for school-leavers. We will continue to do so, cooperating wherever possible with local Governmental authorities. But it is obvious that much more is required on everyone's part to meet the critical needs of our youths. In particular we must involve young people themselves in identifying, designing and implementing alternative approaches to programmes of education, training, jobs and markets.

Questions

47. We propose the following questions for serious consideration:

- i) What do youth want most in society today and how can their voice be better heard?
- ii) What do youth think about the Church and how relevant do they feel it is to their every-day lives?
- iii) What should we do to make our educational system more relevant and responsive to the real needs of our people?

The Crisis of AIDS

48. The AIDS crisis is an on-going tragedy in our Country, caring for our loving and compassionate response. The result of an increasing loosening of sexual

behaviour in our society, it concerns everyone: men, women, youth and families. Although we have already addressed the issue in *Choose to Live*, a pamphlet published in collaboration with our Christian brothers and sisters,⁹¹ we wish to reiterate our concern for the extreme gravity of the problem. It threatens our economic base, social structures, and human values.

49. The basic human and Christian attitude required in the present circumstances are well known: chastity, responsible sexual behaviour; education, especially of the youth who are particularly vulnerable; loving care, acceptance and support of AIDS sufferers. An honest and open approach to the crisis is a real necessity. Fear and hiding of the problem will not help in its solution. We ask leaders of Catholic organisations and communities to include AIDS education and counselling in their programmes and to undertake ways of compassionate ministry to those who suffer from AIDS and to their families.

Questions

50. We need to ask ourselves questions such as the following:

- i) What is the general attitude of the Zambian population towards AIDS, its causes and its consequences for individuals and society?
- ii) What, as individuals and as Church community, can we do to counteract the spread of AIDS and to care for its victims and their families, especially the most vulnerable such as children born with HIV and orphans?

⁹¹ Christian Council of Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, Zambia Episcopal Conference, *Choose to Live: Reflections on the Aids Crisis*, 1988.

THANKSGIVING AND CALL TO WITNESS

51. The centenary of the Catholic Church of Zambia is now being celebrated at parish, diocesan and National levels. Our youth, our priests and religious, and our families are involved. We wholeheartedly thank all those who have generously given of their time and energy for the spiritual and material celebration of this jubilee. It is for us an occasion of great joy.

52. As we rejoice in the present and look forward to the future, our hearts are filled with gratitude for what we have received in the past. We remember especially those giants of evangelisation, the pioneer missionary congregations, the White Fathers, Jesuits, Capuchins, and Franciscans, and the White Sisters, Notre Dame de Namur Sisters, Servants of Mary Immaculate, Holy Cross Sisters, Dominican Sisters and Franciscan Sisters. We are grateful also for the continued assistance of so many congregations of priest, sisters and brothers, of diocesan priests and lay volunteers, from other countries.

53. When we remember all the blessings we have received we can rightly be filled with wonder and praise, "For the Lord who is mighty has done great things for me" (Luke 1:49). We thank the Lord for all that has been achieved during these first hundred years. But we are aware that recognition of gifts in the past impels us to work even harder in the present.

54. "You shall be my witness." That challenge from Jesus, the challenge of evangelisation, rings again in our ears as we move into the second century of the Catholic Church in Zambia. We move forward with great trust in God. With the Apostle Paul, we are confident that God who has begun this great work in us will carry it forward to its grace

conclusion. (Philippians 1:6). Gifted with faith and love that was shared with us through the early evangelisation efforts, we pledge ourselves to renewed efforts to evangelise future generations in the spirit of Jesus.

55. In order to be faithful to the call of Christ to be witnesses to the Good News, we commit ourselves during this centenary year:

- i) to assess and evaluate our situation in the light of the questions we have asked in this letter;
- ii) to integrate spiritual and pastoral renewal programmes with the social renewal programme called for in the Church's teaching;
- iii) to promote programmes of action in each of the areas of concern we have identified.

56. Together as the People of God, let us exercise our responsibility in loving action. Let us be faithful witnesses!

Tuesday, 9th July 1991

Lusaka, Zambia

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

Rt. Rev. Dennis de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Most Rev. James Spaita	Archbishop of Mansa, Chairman
Most Rev. Adam Kozłowiecki, S.J.	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
Rt. Rev. James Corboy, S.J.	Bishop of Monze
Rt. Rev. Medardo Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Rt. Rev. Abdon Potani, O.F.M. Conv.	Bishop of Solwezi
Rt. Rev. Raymond Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Rt. Rev. Telesphore George Mpundu	Bishop of Mbala
Rt. Rev. Father Joseph Musonda	Administrator of Mansa

LETTER TO ALL CHRISTIANS

BEFORE THE 31 OCTOBER ELECTIONS

**From the Christian Churches' Monitoring Group
23rd September 1991**

The 1991 elections were momentous. The Country was at a major political crossroads. The vote was about change. After 18 years of one party autocratic rule by the UNIP Government, multi-party politics had just been re-introduced by the repeal of Article 4 in the Republican Constitution. The One party Participatory Democracy had clearly failed and Zambians were being asked to vote for change or keep the status quo by voting for UNIP, the ruling Party. Tensions in the Country were very high, hence, the important message from the leaders of the Christian Churches on the seriousness of those elections.

The central message from the Church leaders was a reminder that all authority comes from God our creator, and the will of the people is the basis of the authority of Government. Which is expressed through periodic free and fair elections. This is the foundation for "good governance".

They identify the common good as the overriding concern of elections - not individuals. In this sense, the citizens are urged to register for voting in order to exercise their God-given right to vote.

To ensure the success of the electoral process, the Church leaders call for the observance of all electoral regulations. The success of election also depends on the absence of intimidation, bribery, threats, and violence. All these are to be condemned and discouraged during the electoral process. Finally, acceptance of the outcome of elections reflects a truly free and fair election. The leaders therefore urge all political players to abide by the result of the elections.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and in Jesus our Lord and Saviour!

1. As you know, we Zambians are at an important moment in the life of our young Republic. The re-introduction of multi-party politics makes the forthcoming presidential and general elections a watershed in our political history. These will determine the future direction of our Country.

2. Because of the serious consequences of what occurs in the next few weeks, all Christians must play an active and responsible role in the electoral process. As Christian Church leaders, we therefore write to you our sisters and brothers to encourage you, whatever your political affiliation, to cooperate together to achieve fair and peaceful elections.

3. It is our role as Church leaders to foster peace, reconciliation and justice in our Country, and to show particular concern for the poor. We therefore call upon all Christians, and indeed all women and men who love God, to act in a mature, tolerant, and responsible way in order to ensure a peaceful election process and a just outcome.

Electoral Principles

4. We call upon all people to observe the following principles relating to the elections:

i) The right to govern comes from God the Creator and it is given to the people. The will of the people is thus the basis of the authority of the Government. This is expressed in periodic and free elections. It is therefore a serious responsibility for all citizens to exercise this right to vote in the forthcoming elections.

ii) The credentials of a good candidate for any office should be the following: a person who hears God, a person who shows real ability in private and public life, a person of honesty and integrity, a person who has special care for the poor and the needy, a person who seeks not to be served but to serve. (See Psalm 15:2-5; Mark 10:45)

iii) In a truly free and fair election, all parties should accept the outcome of the election even if it is contrary to their expectations. This is a basic principle in a genuine democratic election. The candidates selected are the people's choice. As a consequence they are given the mandate to govern and to be accountable to the people during their term of office.

iv) The over-riding concern in the elections should be the common good, the general interests, of the entire Nation. Despite different political affiliation, we are all Zambians, sisters and brothers cast together in one destiny of Nationhood.

Electoral Guidelines

5. We call upon all people to observe the following guidelines in their actions during the elections.

i) All who are registered voters should cast their votes responsibly in the Presidential and General Elections. This is their constitutional right and duty.

ii) All should keep safely their National Registration Card and Voter's Card. These two documents will be required to enable a voter to vote on Election Day and should not be parted with for any reason at all.

iii) All who registered voters should satisfy themselves that their names together with other particulars appear properly on the Voters' Register produced by the Electoral Commission.

iv) All should know and tell others that their vote is completely secret. Other than the courts of law, no person has justified access to the ballot papers.

v) No one should offer or accept money, gifts, tokens, or services intended to influence how someone should vote. Any such action should be immediately reported to the Police.

vi) No one should involve themselves in acts of intimidation, threats, violence or any other form of conduct likely to exert improper influence on any voters. Any such action should be immediately reported to the Police.

vii) All should respect the campaign efforts of all political parties. They should not aim to disrupt meetings and should not involve themselves in acts of vandalism such as tearing, defacing or burning political campaign materials.

viii) All should attend rallies and meetings organised by the various political parties, to help them form an intelligent opinion in the selection of candidates. They should question candidates regarding the National issues of economic and political justice for all Zambians, especially for the poor.

ix) All should cooperate fully with the law-enforcement agencies in the conduct of the elections. They should report promptly to the Police any person whose conduct is likely to cause a breach of peace.

Call of Prayer

We ask all Christians and all citizens to pray without ceasing for peace and unity in our Nation and for God's gift for wisdom and courage in the election, On the Sunday before the elections, 27 October, we call for a National Day of Prayer and ask all our Churches to offer special prayers to beg God's merciful blessings for Zambia.

23 September 1991, Lusaka

Fr. I.C. Bantungwa,
Rev. J. Imakando
Mr. W. Simposya

Secretary General ZEC
Secretary General EFZ
Acting Secretary General CCZ

**PRESS STATEMENT
ON THE DECLARATION OF ZAMBIA
AS A CHRISTIAN NATION**

16th January 1992

A "Nation is not Christian by declaration, but by deeds", is the key message of the Christian Church leaders. This is the central message in this Statement. This was in response to President Chiluba's unilateral declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation.

The legitimacy of any public pronouncement and policy depends on the quality of consultations done prior to the announcement. It also requires a time of preparing the Nation so that citizens understand what they are getting into. In the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation, these elements were missing. This is why the Church leaders only welcomed the declaration cautiously.

The leaders also voice concern that there should be adequate guarantees that the declaration would not compromise the freedom of conscience and the freedom of worship. The environment where minority groups felt secure and included was to be promoted within the reality of the declaration. The Church leaders hope that the separation of the Church and State, even in the context of the declaration, would remain intact.

1. We, the representatives of Christian Council of Zambia, The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and The Zambia Episcopal Conference in consultation have agreed upon the following Statement:-

2. We affirm our faith and love in God who sent his Son- Jesus Christ to give life, freedom and hope to all and we submit ourselves to His Lordship.

3. The Christian Church has been instrumental in

forming the peaceful history of our Nation through the promotion of worship, education, health, and in times of disagreement - dialogue, all for the development of the whole person and which has given us the Christian values we now enjoy in our everyday life and which are enriched in the Country's constitution.

4. We believe it is in this context that the President has declared Zambia a "Christian Nation" based on the righteous principles of the word of God.

5. While most Christians wholeheartedly welcome the declaration of President Chiluba others have expressed their reservations. Given the complexity of the matter and of its implications a diversity of opinions is legitimate. We take the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation as a serious challenge and we want to answer it. Our unity is greater than our diversity.

6. Although we regret the lack of consultation with the Churches and lack of preparation of the Nation. We however noted the very positive points in the declaration and subsequent television interview given by President Chiluba which affirmed freedom of conscience, and the freedom of worship and expression in an environment of Christian love which excludes the persecution of minority groups.

7. The provisions and guarantees of the Constitution of the Republic of Zambia should be adhered to at all times and the Church and State should continue to remain separate. The Christian Church in Zambia will continue to collaborate and offer constructive criticism to the State where necessary as it is felt that Christian principles have had and should continue to have a positive impact on the development of the Nation.

8. In view of the fact that Christianity is the main religion in Zambia, and of the assurance that the rights of those practising other religions will be respected, we endorse the President's declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation and we accept his challenge to rededicate ourselves to the Glory of Almighty God.

9. We appeal to all to take up the call to hard work and to fight corruption and other evils in our Country and to follow the Christian values of love, respect, justice and tolerance for all.

16th January 1992

Rev. V. Sampa-Bredt
Rev. J. Imakando
Fr. J-L Calmettes

General Secretary - CCZ
General Secretary - EFZ
Acting Secretary General - ZEC

THE FUTURE IS OURS

Pastoral Letter by the Catholic Bishops of Zambia

February, 1992

The new Government of President Chiluba took power at the end of 1991, after a surprisingly peaceful election. The Catholic Bishops then asked many Christians what their hopes and fears were as Zambia entered the Third Republic in order to share these in a pastoral letter. This letter begins by speaking of the need for a new culture of responsibility, accountability and hard work. The Church must itself show these virtues as a model for society. Human rights and duties are emphasised, with calls for more open communications and of fair justice system. Speaking of the transition to a liberalised economy, the letter states that the economy must serve the people and then presents seven economic principles from the Church's social teaching (backed up by extensive footnotes, relying especially on John Paul II's recently published "One Hundred Years"). Other key points: agricultural development is the number one priority, structural adjustment must be critically monitored, external debt should be substantially cancelled, and the declaration of the "Christian Nation" should be evaluated in terms of its impact on justice and the poor.

In the "Future is Ours" the Catholic Bishops called for a new culture of democracy to go with the democratic process the Country chose to embark on following the 1991 general elections. The Bishops spoke of a "new moral culture of responsibility and a new political and economic culture of accountability". People needed to work extra hard to build the new democratic Nation. Human rights are the pillars on which democracy rests. In this new democratic culture of hard work, responsibility, accountability, transparency, and the respect of human rights, the Church offered itself as the model. These ideas are further developed in the Statement on the "Christian View of Multi-Party Values and Culture".

Introduction

1. The future is ours! This rallying cry is both a hope and a challenge for all of us Zambians today. It is a hope that with God's help we can improve our lives and the lives of our children. It is a challenge to work together to bring about that better future.

2. Over the past few months, we have asked many of our Christian sisters and brothers to tell us of their hopes and fears, their expectations and desires, as Zambia enters into the Third Republic. We have been listening carefully and we want now to share their views with a wider audience, especially with our leaders.

3. This moment in our national history is truly a crossroads. It is a time for decisions, which require wisdom, courage and hard work. There is a commitment on the part of our people, shown in their involvement in the elections and their willingness to bear sacrifices.

4. All of us are encouraged by the successful democratic elections of 31 October 1991, and by the peaceful transition to the new Government. We thank our loving God for the special care shown to us during this time.

5. In particular, we congratulate the people of Zambia for their mature participation in free and fair elections. We want especially to thank the thousands of independent monitors who contributed to these elections through their dedicated and selfless service. The Catholic Church is proud to have been associated with other Churches and civic groups in the outstanding work of the Zambia Elections Monitoring Coordinating Committee (ZEMCC).

6. We consider the present moment to be an opportune time to address not only our new Government but also all the people of Zambia as we focus upon our common

responsibilities and duties in the Third Republic. We are responding to the Manifesto of the current ruling party, which stated: "MMD shall welcome criticism, ideas and practical cooperation from religious groups."⁹²

7. In doing this, we are guided not only by the vision offered in the Scriptures and in the social teaching of the Church, but also by the direction set forth in our own recent pastoral statements.⁹³ We do not presume to set forth specific politics and programmes, but we do offer guidelines and principles. For the social wisdom of our Church enables us "to analyse social realities, to make judgements about them and to indicate directions to be taken for the just resolution of the problems involved."⁹⁴

A New Culture

8. Today many people are speaking of the need for a new "culture" here in Zambia. This refers to a new moral culture of responsibility and a new political and economic culture of accountability.

9. This need is experienced in the face of the many challenges confronting our people and our Government. The current socio-economic situation in Zambia is indeed serious:

i) Nearly 60% of our households are unable to meet the standard for adequate nutrition for their members;⁹⁵

⁹² Movement for multi-Party Democracy, Manifesto, 1991. P. 10

⁹³ Zambia Episcopal Conference, Economics, Politics and Justice (1990), and You Shall Be My Witnesses: Evangelisation for the Second Century (1991); also Christian Council of Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, and Zambia Episcopal Conference, Christian Liberation, Justice and Development (1987).

⁹⁴ Pope John Paul II, One Hundred Years (1991), No. 5.

⁹⁵ Republic of Zambia, Prices and Incomes Commission, *Household Expenditure and Income Survey - 1991: Preliminary Results*, Lusaka, November, 1991 P. 14.

ii) Overall National economic output has continued to decline and unemployment continued to grow;⁹⁶

iii) Inflation has been running well over 100% for the past few years⁹⁷

iv) Our health and education services have almost collapsed;

v) AIDS is affecting more and more families and depleting our most productive sectors in society.

10. Because of such gigantic problems, many people are making serious demands on the new Government and expecting almost instant solutions. However, it is clear that all the desired changes will not occur overnight. This is a point made abundantly clear in the Government's Budget Address of 31st January 1992.

Call To Hard Work

11. While on the one hand we challenge the new Government to fulfil its promises, on the other hand we call upon all Zambians to take the necessary steps themselves to bring about the required changes in our socioeconomic situation through increased hard work and dedication to the common good.

12. Again and again, we have heard from the people the call to return to a spirit of hard work and cooperation. It is true that some in the rural and urban areas are working hard, and frequently without adequate reward. But there are also by far too many among us who at times succumb to the temptations of laziness, apathy, fatalism, cheating, avoidance of responsibilities, blaming of others, kick-backs, etc. For example, who has not at times gone into a Government office, a store, or a school and been disappointed in the lack of service offered? We cannot excuse such failures to fulfil responsibilities we have undertaken.

⁹⁶ Republic of Zambia, *Budget Address* by the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Emmanuel G. Kasonde, MP, January, 1992. No. 25.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 38

13. We know that the future of Zambia is primarily in our own hands. Consequently, we must create greater self-reliance and less dependence on Government and on charitable handouts. We must increase National, community and personal productivity. We must exercise a sense of conscientiousness and professionalism that takes pride and satisfaction in doing a good job in building the Nation.

14. Moreover, greater respect should be promoted for public properties and institutions. While it is true that insufficient funds have been allocated for the upkeep of educational and health standards, this cannot excuse vandalism in schools or stealing in hospitals. Nor can we overlook the lack of commitment to the decent upkeep of our townships, villages and homes. These harmful attitudes and actions must stop and a deeper sense of self-respect instilled among us all.

15. We need to eliminate the anti-social behaviour which tears apart the fabric of our communities, (e.g., stealing, killing, drunkenness), and deal directly with issues which undercut cooperation, progress and trust in the community. One such area is our failure to remove witchcraft beliefs and practices from our midst. In many areas this is a growing problem, a source of fear and a serious block to true development. Stronger legal steps should be taken to curb this problem.

Church As Model

16. We recognise that in the promotion of this new culture of responsibility and accountability, the Church itself should be a model for society. We cannot call others to virtues, which we ourselves do not make an effort to practice. Hence we pledge to take steps toward greater openness and honesty about the decisions, actions and

finances of our Church. Moreover, we will encourage participation and self-reliance within our own structure, e.g., by reaching out to involve young people in planning and decision-making.

17. In our Centenary Pastoral Letter of last year, we explicitly mentioned four areas of special concern: family, youth, women and the crisis of AIDS. We call attention once again to the need for our people to work together to meet the challenges posed in each of these areas. In particular, we urge greater efforts to ensure the equal inclusion of women in decision-making processes, which affect politics and economics. As religious leaders, we will make our own efforts to involve more women in the development of our Church and Nation.

18. The rapid growth of our population is a serious challenge affecting the economic, social and moral well being of our people. We repeat here what we said in our Centenary Pastoral Letter: "While maintaining the basic right of parents to decide freely the number of their children, we recognise that population growth should be balanced with the rate of development of our resources. We therefore remind all of the duty of responsible parenthood and of the demand of the moral law."⁹⁸

19. Moreover, we emphasise again the urgency of dealing more effectively with the crisis of AIDS. There is need for openness about this sickness, its causes and prevention, and its consequences, personal and social, for the future of our Nation. A loving and compassionate response is called for, avoiding all discrimination against persons with AIDS.

98 "You Shall Be my Witnesses," No. 38.

Democracy And Rights

20. It is clear that central to the new political culture must be promotion of a spirit of service and accountability within the Government. After such a long period of one-party rule, workers in both the public and private sectors have to learn to appreciate the meaning of multi-party democracy and the consequent change in attitudes and actions this entails. Hard work needs to be rewarded and favouritism removed; privileges for officials needs to be curtailed; and the austerity required in a time of change needs to be equally shared among all. Any spirit of vengeance or vindictiveness must be avoided.

21. Democracy rests upon human rights. These rights are not endowments of our Government but gifts of our Creator. Enshrined in the Constitution of the Third Republic of Zambia, they are also expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter of Human and People's Rights of the Organisation of African Unity (to both of which Zambia is a signatory). There is also the recently adopted Convention on the Rights of the Child.

22. The social teaching of the Church emphasises the central place of these rights and their corresponding duties in human society. To build true democracy in Zambia, we need to educate our citizens about their rights and duties.⁹⁹ The Church will monitor the activities of our Government to assure that both the political and economic rights of all are respected.

⁹⁹ "... today we are witnessing a predominance, not without signs of opposition, of the democratic ideal, together with lively attention to and concern for human rights. But for this very reason it is necessary for peoples in the process of reforming their systems to give democracy an authentic and solid foundation through the explicit recognition of those rights." John Paul II, *One Hundred Years*, No, 47.

23. A hopeful development in our political culture in the year has been the growth of more open communications in the press, radio and television. We commend workers in these fields for their contributions and free discussions on important issues. But freedom always demands responsibility in honest reporting and fair commentary. In dealing with National issues, the media should be particularly sensitive to what affects the poor and powerless in our society.

24. We are deeply concerned about the level of insecurity in our Country. We are grateful to the new Government for the swift lifting of the State of Emergency. But the Country, both urban and rural, needs to be made even safer for all the people. The police force is an important factor contributing to this safety. However, it needs to be sufficiently staffed, better trained, more adequately paid and more effectively deployed. Courts need to be more prompt in handing down judgements, for "justice delayed is justice denied." Steps should be taken to eliminate all practices of torture and ill treatment.

Economics Serving People

25. It is true, painfully true, that the Zambian economy needs restructuring. But we must recall the fundamental norm for judging the success of any economic reforms: they must serve all the people. Liberalisation, privatisation and the free market systems are not natural laws to be blindly obeyed in the operation of the economy. They are merely human instruments, which must be constantly evaluated in terms of their promotion of the common good. As socialist and centralised economic structures are

dismantled, we must not forget the human and social concerns, which any new structures must meet¹⁰⁰

26. We appreciate the efforts of the new Government to address forthrightly the economic problems of the Nation. The 1992 Budget Message offers a thorough review of the current state of the economy and makes strong proposals to meet the challenges facing us. But it is our responsibility as religious leaders to evaluate the Budget measures in terms of their social impact on the people as a whole.

27. Reflecting on the current situation in Zambia as we are restructuring our economy, we urge that the following principles from the social teaching of our Church are particularly relevant:

i) The burden of restructuring the economy must not fall disproportionately on those who already suffer, this is, the poor, especially women, children, elderly and handicapped (e.g. removal of mealie-meal subsidies must be matched by measures which also ask sacrifices of the better sectors of society).¹⁰¹

100 "In teaching us charity, the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due the poor and the special situation they have in society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others." Paul VI, *Call to Action* (1971), No 23.

101 Ibid.

ii) Private property, while a right to be guaranteed, is not an absolute right and must always serve the common good (e.g. selling off the parastatal must not concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a few for their own benefits).¹⁰²

iii) Economic well-being does not consist in having more but in being more (e.g. promotion of more and more consumer goods should not of itself be seen as a sign of economic health).¹⁰³

iv) There should always be a priority of labour over capital. This means that the input of the human person has priority over the structures of money, natural resources and technology in designing economic policies (e.g. the promotion of decent jobs takes precedence over profit for foreign investors).¹⁰⁴

102 "God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus, as all people follow justice and unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis. Whatever the forms of ownership may be, as adapted to the legitimate institutions of people according to diverse and changeable circumstances, attention must always be paid to the universal purpose for which created goods are meant. In using them, therefore, we should regard our lawful possessions not merely as our own but also as common property in the sense that they should accrue to the benefit of not only ourselves but of others." Second Vatican Council, *The Church Today* (1965), No. 69. See also John Paul II, *One Hundred Years* (1991), No. 30.

103 "It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being' and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself," John Paul II, *One Hundred Years*, No. 36.

104 "We must emphasise and give prominence to the primacy of the human person in the production process, the primacy of the human person over things. Everything contained in the concept of capital in the strict sense is only a collection of things. Men and women, as the subject of work, and independently of the work that they do - they alone are persons." John Paul II, *On Human Work* (1981), No. 12.

v) Production should be promoted primarily to meet the needs of the people and not primarily to return profits on investment, either local or foreign (e.g., the needs of the poor are more important than the wants of the rich).¹⁰⁵

vi) The mechanisms of the free market must always be subject to social control to assure more equitable distribution and more effective protection of all the various goods of society (e.g. health forces by themselves cannot control basic services such as health, education transport, housing, nor protect collective goods such as environment)¹⁰⁶

vii) The State has a legitimate positive role in the economy, not in simply enabling private enterprise but also in promoting more human conditions for workers and consumers alike (e.g. the Government should regulate industries and commerce to protect workers' rights and to curb exploitation of the poor and weak).¹⁰⁷

105 "In fact, the purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but it is to be found in its very existence as a community of persons who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society." John Paul II, *One Hundred Years*, No. 35.

106 vi) The mechanisms of the free market must always be subject to social control to assure more equitable distribution and more effective protection of all the various goods of society (e.g. health forces by themselves cannot control basic services such as health, education transport, housing, nor protect collective goods such as environment)

107 vii) The State has a legitimate positive role in the economy, not in simply enabling private enterprise but also in promoting more human conditions for workers and consumers alike (e.g. the Government should regulate industries and commerce to protect workers' rights and to curb exploitation of the poor and weak).

28. In light of these principles from the Church's social teaching, the current policies of the economic restructuring programme need to be carefully studied and evaluated. We are aware that all too few of our Catholics have an adequate knowledge and appreciation of the social teaching which, as can be seen, is so relevant to our current situation. Therefore we encourage deeper study of the documents and their contemporary application.

Economic Priorities

29. The recovery of Zambia's agricultural potential has to be the number one priority in addressing our problems. We need to be able to provide food at prices, which both give a just return to farmers and are reasonable to consumers. This requires addressing land tenure issues, availability of inputs and markets, extension services and ecologically sustainable farming methods.

30. But agricultural improvement also demands that more attention be paid to the rural sector of Zambia. The rural areas need to be made more attractive in order to stem the growing tide of people, especially youth, to the cities. This calls for improved schools and health facilities, access to markets, better roads and communications, electrification. People-centred development programmes - that is, programmes, which involve the people in identifying the problems, planning the responses, and cooperating together to work for solutions-are essential. For this reason, the Catholic Church has supported and will continue to support the approach of Development Education throughout the Country.

31. The protection of the environment must be a serious concern for our economic well- being. God's creation is a

precious gift for all Zambians, both for those of us alive today and for the future generations. Hence we must show respect for the integrity of creation. This requires stronger efforts on the part of Government and citizens alike in order to limit the terribly damaging effects of industrial pollution, deforestation, water poisoning, poaching, bush fires. In this regard, we welcome the naming of a Minister for Environment as a step to protect the environment.

32. The creation of adequate employment is a great challenge, as more and more of our people, especially the young, are becoming frustrated and hopeless in failing to find jobs. As new investments are sought in this Country, these should be the kind which generate jobs. Fair wages call for constant adjustments, especially under the pressure of inflation. In particular domestic workers need greater legal protection and a decent minimum wage.

33. All of us are dismayed and distressed by the decline of educational and health services in the Country. Indeed, many people have called for the return of some schools and hospitals to the control of the Churches. In such cases, for example, the Churches would have more say over the appointment of managers. As everyone understands, however, this is a complex issue, which will take time to settle wisely. We are pleased that discussions are currently going between Government and Church officials regarding this question and we will keep the public informed of the results of these discussions.

34. We agree that the proposed reform of the tax structure should assure that people with lower incomes are not forced to pay a disproportionate amount of taxes. Such a move recognises the need for sharing more fairly the costs of Government. We call for collection policies that are more equitable and efficient, reminding our citizens that

support of the Government's efforts to serve the people is a moral obligation.

Structural Adjustment And Debt

35. As we have stressed here, the structural adjustment programme, which Zambia has embarked on in conjunction with international donors, has to be constantly monitored. Not only are the short-term effects upon the population, especially the poor, to be evaluated, but also the long-term effects on the type of development model being promoted, e.g., as affecting job creation, environmental concerns, dependency and regional cooperation.

36. Indeed, we hear the cry of how much Zambia's economic future is being enslaved to the demands of repaying our huge external debt. Some of this debt is admittedly due to our own poor planning, inefficient management, corruption and lack of commitment to the national welfare. But by far the major bulk of it is due to factors simply beyond our control: failing commodity prices (e.g., copper), rising import prices (e.g., oil), and increasing external interest rates (caused by recessions in Northern countries). The biblical injunctions against enslaving people because of their indebtedness speak to our situation today with particular forcefulness.¹⁰⁸

108 "The Lord says, 'The people of Israel have sinned again and again, and for this I will certainly punish them. They sell into slavery honest people who cannot pay their debts, poor people who cannot repay even the price of sandals. They trample down the weak and helpless and push the poor out of the way....At every place of worship they sleep on clothing they have taken from the poor as security for debts. In the temple of their God they drink wine they have taken from those who owe them money.'" Amos 2:6-8.

37. We are grateful to the foreign lenders who have forgiven small portions of the enormous debt owed by Zambia (US\$7.2 billion), almost US\$1000 for every woman, man and child in Zambia). But as religious leaders, we cannot stand by silently as our Nation's limited resources are diverted away from meeting our people's needs toward paying Governments and banks in the developed countries and our political stability as a democracy is threatened.

We therefore join with the appeal of many Church leaders around the world in demanding large-scale forgiveness of debts.¹⁰⁹

Zambia As A "Christian Nation"

38. Much attention in recent weeks has been given to the action of 29 December 1991 by President Chiluba declaring Zambia to be a "Christian Nation." The Statement issued on 16 January 1992 by the representatives of the Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia,

109 "The principle that debt must be paid is certainly just. However, it is not right to demand or expect payment when the effect would be the imposition of political choices leading to hunger and despair for entire peoples. It cannot be expected that the debts which have been contracted should be paid at the price of unbearable sacrifices. In such cases it is necessary to find - as in fact is partly happening - ways to lighten, defer or even cancel the debt, compatible with the fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress." John Paul II, *One Hundred Years*, No. 35.

See also the remarks of John Paul II to the Diplomatic Corps during his 1989 visit to Zambia: "Recent moves on the part of the developed and creditor countries to lessen the burdens of repayment on the economies of debtor nations are obviously a step in the right direction. Such moves deserve to be encouraged. But much more remains to be done.... It has become more and more evident the measures of solidarity are imperative so that hope may be restored to many sorely tried people. I pray that those in a position to influence events will truly express the solidarity in a new and generous approach to the problems of international debt." Catholic Secretariat, *John Paul II Talks to Zambia*, pp. 23-24.

and the Zambia Episcopal Conference clarified the stance of the Christian Churches regarding this presidential declaration. The Statement regretted "the lack of consultation with Churches and the lack of preparation of the Nation," though nothing positive points in the declaration and subsequent interviews given by the President which affirmed the freedom of religion. According to the Statement, "the Church and State should continue to remain separate."¹¹⁰

39 For this reason, we call upon all Zambians to respect the constitutional guarantee of freedom of conscience and freedom of worship and expression. According to the Church's social teaching, this constitutional guarantee must include the right of public expression and the protection against any sort of discrimination.¹¹¹ Therefore we deplore the suggestions made by some that non-Christians would not enjoy the same rights as Christians in practicing and promoting their religions here in Zambia.

40. We are aware, of course, that a Nation is not Christian by declaration but by deeds. Zambia can be a "Christian Nation" only if Zambia Christians follow Jesus in a life of love and respect for one another, a life of dedication, honesty and hard work.

110 Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, The Christian Council of Zambia, Zambia Episcopal Conference, "Press Statement," 16 January 1992.

111 The Second Vatican Council declared in 1965 that "the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person, as his dignity is known through the revealed Word of God and by reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognised in the constitutional law whereby society is governed. Thus it is to become a civil right." *Declaration on Religious Freedom*, No. 2

In particular we must follow the examples of self-sacrifice, even unto death on the Cross (Philippians 2:8), which enabled Jesus to preach the Good News to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, and lift up the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19). It will be in the deeds of justice and concern for the poor that we show the Christian character of our Nation.

41. In line with this understanding of the Christian vocation, we want to remind all members of our Church of the obligation to put their faith into practice in the ordinary events of their daily lives. Whether serving in Parliament or labouring in the fields, working in a market or raising children at home, teaching in a school or nursing in a clinic, the Christian cooperates in the building of the Kingdom of God. The Church is present in all these activities through the witness of our members.¹¹²

CONCLUSIONS

42. In closing, we want to say forthrightly that the time for bemoaning the mistakes and failures of the past is over. Now is the time for determination and action for the future!

43. We Zambians must show determination:

- to build a Nation which protects the rights of all;
- to work hard and responsibly, with discipline and self-respect;

¹¹² See Second Vatican Council, *The Church Today*, especially Nos. 40-44. "For whoever promotes the human community at the family level, culturally, in its economic, social and political dimensions, both Nationally and internationally, such a one, according to God's design, is contributing greatly to the Church community as well, to the extent that it depends on things outside itself," No. 44

- to stamp out dishonesty, corruption, favouritism;
 - to resist revenge and vindictiveness.
44. And we must take action:
- to restore our agricultural capacity to feed our people;
 - to repair our schools, health facilities and roads;
 - to create job opportunities, especially for our youth;
 - to protect our natural environment for future generations.
45. The challenge facing us all, citizens and leaders alike, is immense. But we write this Pastoral Letter with confidence, because we have trust in the people of Zambia and in our strength in the Lord.
46. As we move forward in the days and years ahead, we know that the future of Zambia is not for the winning political party but for the people, all of the people. Truly, the future is ours! Therefore we need to cooperate together in promoting the common good and in showing special concern for the poor, which our faithful following of Jesus demands (Matthew 25:31-46).
47. The manner in which we in Zambia respond to the present moment of our national history, as we struggle to build a truly democratic nation, and an efficient and equitable economy, will be watched closely by other nations throughout Africa. But even more important, our efforts will be watched closely by our loving Creator.
48. May God bless the efforts of our people and of our Government with wisdom!

Lusaka, Zambia

March 16, 1992

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

Bishop Dennis H. de Jong	Ndola Diocese, ZEC Chairman
Archbishop Adrian Mung'andu	Lusaka Archdiocese
Archbishop James Spaita	Kasama Archdiocese
Bishop Medardo Mazombwe	Chipata Diocese
Bishop Abdon Potani, OFM. Conv.	Solwezi Diocese
Bishop Raymond Mpezele	Livingstone Diocese
Bishop Telesphore G. Mpundu	Mbala-Mpika Diocese
Bishop Paul Lungu, S.J.	Monze Diocese
Very Rev. Fr Joseph Musonda	Administrator, Mansa Diocese
Archbishop Adam Kozłowiecki, S.J.	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
Bishop James Corboy, S.J.	Retired Bishop of Monze

PASTORAL STATEMENT ON DROUGHT AND FAMINE

21st June 1992

The most severe drought in recent history caused immense suffering among Zambians in 1992, as half of the harvest failed. In their brief Statement, the Bishops said that the drought should not be looked at as a punishment from God but a call to work for a society marked by greater social justice. The response must be three-fold: the charity of relief, the work of development, and the pursuit of justice. This response is the test of true faith in God and authentic Christian commitment. The international community is thanked for its help, but cancellation of our external debt is again called for.

“I was hungry and you gave me to eat”

1. Because of the several droughts that have affected Zambia and other parts of southern Africa, these words of Our Lord Jesus take on a special meaning and urgency as our people now face the pains of famine and hunger. Many of our elders say that they have never before in their life witnessed such a drought in Zambia. Our crop yield is far below what is necessary to feed our people. We are already dependent on imported maize. The price of mealie-meal, already beyond the range of so many of the poor, is likely to move even higher.

2. Although our situation is not as desperate as that of some of our neighbours, half of our harvest has failed. A great part of our population is already experiencing hunger, especially in the Southern, Central, Eastern and Western provinces which are affected by the drought. In other provinces there are people who also have lost their crops due to lack of rain. Many will have neither food at hand to feed their families, nor sufficient money to purchase food.

3. Indeed, in some parts of the Country, the lack of sufficient water threatens animals as well as people. Rivers, dams and wells, which normally dry up late in the dry season, are already without water. Animals are being sold off by their owners, and many others are dying from lack of water and diseases. By the time we reach the next rains in November, there will be too few animals for ploughing in the new season.

Call From God

4. In the face of such a serious calamity, all the resources of the Nation must be mobilised. This is a tremendous challenge to our new Government in the opening months of the Third Republic. We appreciate the measures taken to face the crisis with determination and efficiency. But the challenge is also a strong call to all of us Christians and we must collaborate with and complement the efforts of the Government.

5. We must not see the drought as a punishment or curse from God, but rather as a call from God to define more clearly and live more faithfully our identity as Christians. For “those who have” it is a call to solidarity, compassion and charity. For those “who have not” it is a call to trust in God’s providence. For all of us, it is a call to work for a society marked by greater social justice.

6. As we are reminded in the Letter of the Apostle James, our faith must be demonstrated in works, especially the works of sharing with the needy (James 2:14-23). This sharing must be even of the very little we have, as we learn in the Old Testament story of the widow of Zarephath who shared with the prophet Elijah out of her poverty (1 Kings 17:16). The followers of Jesus will be moved with compassion with him, seeing who are very

hungry (Mark 8:2-3). And we will recall his words, "I was hungry and you gave me to eat!" (Matthew 25:35)

7. Our own African culture similarly calls us to solidarity, that we may preserve our sense of family and community. We must particularly care for the children. The children are the future of our Nation, as the Bemba proverb reminds us, "Imiti Ikula e mpanga." This is not a call only to care for our own children, but for all children in need. According to the Cinyanja proverb, "Mwana wa mzako niwako yemwe" - the child of your neighbour is your own child.

Three-Fold Response

8. Response by our Church to this national drought demands the charity of relief, the work of development, and the suit of justice.

9. First, in the present famine situation, pastoral workers are called upon to engage in relief programmes as necessary and as much as possible. These programmes involve our parishes and schools, our hospitals and other agencies. In the drought areas, task forces and coordinating structures are being set up at parish and diocesan levels. In order to reach the most vulnerable and affected people, specific groups and needs have to be identified. We should also assist to determine the most appropriate forms of aid, including direct and subsidies, deliveries for sale, food for work, support of malnourished children and families, and free distribution.

10. In order to make the best possible use of resources and avoid duplication we must coordinate our efforts with Government agencies, particularly those of health and agriculture and other non-Governmental groups. There must be strict accountability of all relief funds and

foodstuffs through careful supervision, documentation and evaluation. Moreover, the Church programmes should take special steps so that in these relief efforts the dignity of those receiving assistance is respected and over-dependence on food aid avoided.

11. Second, moves towards rehabilitation and development must not lag behind the relief efforts. Relief is only short-term, for emergencies; development is for the long-term. Surely the prospect of future drought must impel us to train our people in better agricultural planning and farming methods. Programmes of development education and other training programmes run by the dioceses must be strengthened, with special attention paid to women and youth. Sustainable agriculture methods need to be taught and drought resistance crops introduced. Furthermore, adequate schemes of food security should be devised.

12. Third, all our efforts must aim at promoting justice and fairness. Too frequently in the past, programmes designed to help the poorest have not in fact done so. Instances of discrimination, favouritism and corruption in the distribution of assistance must be reported and eliminated. Political and religious partisanship must have no place in the efforts aimed at feeding the people. At a time when strenuous efforts need to be made to avoid starvation among our people, justice demands that less money be spent on superfluous extras by all: e.g. extravagant allowances on local and overseas trips, unnecessary expenses by the clergy. Proper priorities need to be established by the Government and the Church.

Internal Assistance

13. We are deeply grateful to the international community of donors and our Church partners for the assistance that they have offered in the past and are offering now in our present

crisis. Given the extent of the damage brought on by the drought and the devastating effects of famine, this is a significant sign of generosity and solidarity. It is of course tragic that we Africans must once again come before the world community asking for help. But it would be even more tragic for the scourge of famine to sweep across the continent without that help coming. For then the community of the human family would be dangerously broken.

14. Because the large external debt of Zambia has such a draining effect on our economy, we repeat the appeal which we made in our Pastoral Letter, *The Future Is Ours*, that there be large-scale forgiveness of our debt. We cannot be expected to take the food away from the mouths of our children and be deprived in order to return interest payments to the rich Nations.

Test Of Christian Faith

15. Last year we celebrated 100 year of the Catholic faith in Zambia. Our community has grown strong with ministries and institutions of our own. We are thankful to God for many blessings. But now the test has come for us to show how deep is our Christian faith, how authentic is our Christian commitment. By working hard, cooperating together, sharing resources and undertaking sacrifices, we Zambian Christians can, with God's help, move into the second century with mature faith.

16. Our response as a Christian community to the crisis of drought and famine can be a moment of renewal in all our ministries. It can be an occasion for us to review our pastoral plans at the local, diocesan and national levels, to evaluate the effectiveness of our development and training programmes, to examine our education and religious formation courses.

17. In addition to the use of funds from our Lenten Collection to meet the needs of the poor, we pledge ourselves to set up a special "solidarity fund" to share resources with others, both nationally and internationally, who are suffering from the drought. There are those who are stricken than we are here in Zambia at this time, and our sharing will show our solidarity with them. In particular we call upon Catholics who are blessed with good incomes to be extra generous in contributing to the "solidarity fund."

18. Finally, on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, "Corpus Christ," when we celebrate the gift of the bread, which "comes down from heaven and gives life to the world," (John 6:33), we know that the challenge that faces us is truly a religious challenge. Strengthened by the sharing of the Eucharist, we must share our daily bread with the hungry in our midst. Together, then, we will be able to hear the words of Jesus, "I was hungry and you gave me to eat."

Signed:

Bishop Dennis De Jong, Bishop of Ndola

Chairman - Zambia Episcopal Conference

Lusaka

21 June 1992

Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ

“HEAR THE CRY OF THE POOR”**A PASTORAL LETTER
ON THE CURRENT SUFFERING OF
THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA****From the Catholic Bishops of Zambia****July 1993**

As the impact of economic policies guided by the Structural Adjustment Programme became more evident in the lives of ordinary Zambians, the Church spoke out strongly to challenge the Government to pay more attention to the immense suffering of the people. The letter challenges the primacy accorded to free market dominance and notes the decline in social indicators of well-being. SAP is not a natural law but a human creation that needs to be questioned in terms of its timing, content and direction. The letter is critical of a programme that pays more attention to fiscal management than to human development. Three specific recommendations are made at the conclusion, for an independent tribunal to negotiate prices and wages, a national task force on social services and a national forum to evaluate SAP. Unless concrete action is taken soon, Government policies that show lack of social concern can lead to an “economic apartheid” in which the gap between rich and poor widens. The call to look closely at the social consequences of SAP laid the foundation for the SAP Monitoring Project begun in [1994] by the CCJP. It is significant that President Chiluba initially criticised the Bishops’ letter but later acknowledged its importance.

1. "People are the greatest resource of every Country." How often we hear that statement! And how true it is for us here in Zambia! Our people are indeed our greatest resource, our richest treasures, and our best hope for the future.

2. Yet today in Zambia we hear of the frightening exhaustion of that resource, of its diminishment, deterioration, exploitation. We sadly note that this resource is being reduced amidst great suffering, a suffering which by and large seems to go on unnoticed by those in power and is often inadequately responded to by Government programmes.

3. We are aware of, and we do commend, our Government's efforts last year to deal with the tragic effects of the drought. We appreciate the recent expression of concern on the part of President Chiluba regarding the issue of wages for civil servants and teachers. We echo his call for restraint in the face of inflation. But we feel that much more needs to be said and to be done if we are to meet effectively the massive problem of human suffering in Zambia today.

4. As pastoral leaders, we cannot be silent in the face of this suffering or our people. The word of God challenges us: "If you refuse to hear the cry of the poor, your own cry for help will not be heard." (Proverbs 21:13)

5. As pastoral leaders, then, we must speak out and call upon all people of good will to deal more forthrightly with this increasing suffering in our midst.

The People's Suffering

6. We all know of our people's suffering. The story of the Mulenga family is, sad to say, a story all too common today'

7. The wife, Mary Mulenga, had been unwell for some time and was being treated for T.B. by the clinic near to her compound home. Because of high food prices, she was not eating regularly. One day she finished up her

drugs. But because of her weakened condition, she was unable to walk to the clinic and her health grew worse. Her husband, Moses Mulenga, was also sick, but he managed to get to the clinic to plead on his wife's behalf. His effort was in vain: the clinic was closed because of a strike of health workers. The community worker came along and after hearing the story advised Moses that the UTH was the only alternative. By this time Mary was so sick that she was unable to travel by bus and so had to go by taxi which cost K4000. On arrival at UTH, Moses was asked for K2000 for admission fee. Having spent so much on taxi, there was no cash remaining. It took Moses two days before he found the admission fee. By the time Mary could be admitted to the ward, she was sicker than ever.

8. This kind of hardship story, though not universal, can be told again and again today in Zambia. It illustrates the different elements in the human suffering that so many of our people are enduring. Mary faced rising food prices, poor health care, high transport costs, lack of necessary funds, unsympathetic public servants. These are but a few of the threatening burdens experienced every day by our people, our greatest resource.

9. A series of recent reports from our Government and from non-Governmental organisations tell of the extent of the suffering of our fellow Zambians.¹¹³

¹¹³ See in particular the following reports: *Zambia Demographic and Health Survey* 1992, prepared by the University of Zambia and the Central Statistics Office, Lusaka, March 1993; *Zambia: Constraints to Social Service Delivery*, study commissioned by the World Bank, Lusaka, May 1993; *The State of World Rural Poverty: An Inquiry into its Causes and Consequences*, published for the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development, 1992; Monthly Reports from the Central Statistical Office for the "Food Security, Nutrition and Health Monitoring System"; Food Security Bulletin, published by the "Zambia Early Warning Unit" of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

- i) 20% of all children born die before the age of five.
- ii) 40% of all children under five are short for their age, a condition reflecting chronic malnutrition.
- iii) Between 20 and 25% of under-five hospital admissions are related to malnutrition.
- iv) The maternal mortality rate has almost doubled over the past decade, from 110 to 200 per 100,000 deliveries.
- v) The proportion of school children enrolled in primary grades has been declining in recent years; for example, only 56% of the 7 year old in Lusaka can find places in Grade One.
- vi) 80% of our rural population and almost 50% of our urban population live below the poverty line.
- vii) An annual inflation rate of close to 200% is placing unbearable burdens on parents struggling to feed their families.
- viii) Only 350,000 people are currently employed in the formal sector and future retrenchments may cut back this figure further by more than 75,000.

10. While these are only figures, they are figures with faces, the human faces of suffering people. What these figures mean in real life is one meal a day, and a very meagre meal at that; little or no medical care; poor housing and clothing; children unable to go to school because parents lack money for fees and uniforms; etc., Rising numbers of street children and an increase in prostitution (with the sad effects of spreading of AIDS) are two more instances of this human suffering.

Threats To Society

11. We believe that this sad state of suffering is giving rise to serious social unrest and conflict in Zambia today that threatens our new democracy. For instance:

- i) Strikes have closed our schools for almost two months and our children are missing out on education.
- ii) Further strikes are affecting the operation of our public services such as health clinics.
- iii) Crime is reaching frightening proportions and insecurity menaces both urban and rural areas.
- iv) Some politically irresponsible people are calling for disruption of society through massive demonstrations and strikes.
- v) Political apathy is growing as only 10% to 15% of registered voters turn out in local and by-elections.

12. In addition, there are many signs of serious moral problems connected with this human suffering. We are concerned about the moral implications of the situation whereby the gap between the rich and the poor in our society appears to be widening. Many people demonstrate a “get-rich quickly” mentality that takes advantage of the difficult economic situation. For example, some traders manipulate prices of scarce commodities, justifying themselves as simply following “market-led” policies without any consideration of the effect on the poor. In remote rural areas, maize is currently being purchased at very low prices from peasant farmers in desperate need of cash and worried about getting their crop to markets.

13. Moreover, the issue of *public corruption* continues to surface in political discussions. It seems clear that people are not yet satisfied that the Government has taken the

necessary steps to bring discipline in its ranks. Stronger leadership at the highest levels needs to be shown to build up public confidence and to set examples and standards of honesty and selflessness. This is particularly true at a time when many people complain that Government officials are not bearing equally the burden of our economic reforms.

The Impact Of SAP

14. What is causing all this suffering? And what is being done to halt the suffering?

15. We all know too well the difficult condition of our economy. Everyone is ready to acknowledge that the MMD Government inherited a bankrupt economy. But we are now almost two years into new Government of the Third Republic. It is well past the time to stop recounting and blaming the mistakes of the previous regime. We need to know what is being done now for the future.

16. Our new Government has gone fully into a "structural adjustment programme" (SAP) that it claims will increase the economic growth of the Country. But as we emphasised in our Pastoral Letter of March 1992, *The Future is Ours*, "we must recall the fundamental norm for judging the success of any economic reforms: they must serve all the people." (#25)

17. Officials of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and representatives of the donor countries are praising the Government for strictly following the SAP conditions. We hear reports in the media that Zambia is doing well in implementing the economic reform programme.

18. But we have to ask: "who is Zambia"? In the light of the human suffering described above, what Zambia

are they talking about when they say, "Zambia is doing well"?

19. The Government has repeatedly told us the SAP will mean, "*short term pain but long term gain*." We can certainly attest to the fact that there is indeed considerable short-term pain, suffered especially by the poor majority. But whether or not there will in fact be long-term gain is still a very open question. And how many Zambians will be around to experience that promised "*long-term gain*"? Are we not facing a frightening situation of the "*survival of the fittest*" in our Nation"?

20. SAP is not a fixed law of nature that cannot be modified. It is a human creation, a product of theory and practice. As a human creation, it needs to be continually subject to ethical consideration as well as to economic analysis. It must not be blindly accepted as the only possible answer to Zambia's problems.

21. We are not questioning the basic necessity to introduce economic reforms into Zambia. Nor are we asking for a return to failed programmes of the past. But we are calling attention to several important questions that are widely raised about the Government's current implementation of the structural adjustment programme:

i) *Timing*: Why has there been such a rapid removal of subsidies, especially before any effective programme to cushion the effects on the most vulnerable in our society has been put in place?

ii) *Content*: Why are so many elements essential to integral human development lacking in the programme, e.g., human capital improvement (education and health), employment generation, promotion of small-scale entrepreneurship, regional cooperation?

iii) *Direction*: Is a discredited “trickle-down” approach to economic growth being promoted, one that only benefits a privileged few in hopes that it will later reach the general public?

22. Without going into the details of the many critical analyses of the structural adjustment programme, we at least ask the Government to acknowledge that there are substantial and legitimate challenges raised about many elements of its operation in Zambia and elsewhere, challenges coming, for instance, from UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, UN-ECA, OXFAM,¹¹⁴ as well as from many sectors within Zambia itself (e.g., trade unions, business and farming groups, academics, social workers, Churches and ordinary citizens). These challenges cannot be dismissed simply as political criticisms.

23. In looking at the operation of the structural adjustment programme, both in earlier stages during the Second Republic and in its full extent in the Third Republic, we must acknowledge that we neither see the promised benefits to date nor do we see convincing evidence that the promised benefits will be forthcoming in the near future. If SAP is in fact such a good programme for economic recovery, can the Government tell us more specifically what are the visible signs of improvement in the lives of our people? We frequently hear from Government officials about improvement in economic indicators such as budget expenditures and new investments. But what about social indicators that tell us what is happening in people’s lives?”

24. The Government has repeated its resolve to cushion the effects of the structural adjustment programme through social action programmes, welfare efforts, etc. But it has to be said that so far these efforts have not been effectively reaching the people. Adequate funding, personnel, timing

and strategies are not present. The social action measures often appear to be merely an “after-thought” and not an integral part of the Government’s economic reform measures. In effect, it seems that more attention has been paid to fiscal management programmes than to the human development programmes.

25. We want to call attention to two other aspects of the Government’s economic liberalisation programme that have important social dimensions. Privatisation should be carried forward in ways that safeguard the delivery of public services to all, respect the rights of workers in the period of transition, and give priority to widespread ownership among Zambians. Land reform should especially protect small family farms and the right of Zambians to own land. Favourable rural development should be promoted to attract urban dwellers to resettle on the land.

A Call To Action

26. Listening to the cry of the poor, then, what are we asking for? We call upon the Government to take action to manifest three qualities that presently we find sadly lacking:

i) *Compassion*: Whether an accurate perception or not, the public is losing faith in the Government’s statement of concern for their problems and suffering. Aside from publicity visits to compounds by some ministers, very little concrete expression of real concern for the poor is heard or seen from Government officials. Appeals for Zambians to “make sacrifices” and “tighten belts” can only be perceived as cynical at best, abusive at worst, when they come from officials who receive such disproportionately high salaries, allowances and benefits.

ii) *Commitment*: There seems to be very little effective action-taking place in responding to the suffering of the people. Ordinary citizens hear more about assistance than actually see it. The sorry experience of the 1992 "Social Action Programme" raises questions about the Government's desire and ability to deliver what it promises.

iii) *Competence*: What is actually happening to so much money coming in from international donors? Why have we not seen full reports on expenditures on social rehabilitation and relief activities? Much attention and technical assistance is focused on improving fiscal management, debt negotiations, tax restructuring, privatisation procedures, etc., but proportionately less attention seems to be given to social programmes.

Specific Recommendations

27. It is neither the role nor the expertise of the Church to offer detailed programmes to meet our economic crisis. Many others, inside and outside the Government, are making such proposals. But we do now offer here three specific recommendations that arise from our position as pastoral leaders and from our perspective of social justice and concern for the poor.

i) **An independent tribunal to negotiate prices and wages**: Without returning to Government control over the setting of prices and wages, can we not find some way of cooperating to slow down the rapid and arbitrary increase of prices that is causing such hardship to our people? Could Zambia experiment with a programme used in some other countries, namely, an independent advisory committee made up of representatives of consumers, unions, and businesses? The purpose of the committee would be to work out compromises that would satisfy buyers and

sellers, employers and employees. A free market economy that does not have adequate social controls does not work fairly for the majority of Zambians.

ii) **A National Task Force on social services:** It might be true that the Government does have several programmes in place to cushion the impact of SAP on the poor and most vulnerable in our society. But these programmes do not appear to be well planned or widely publicised. For example, what is actually being done right now to meet the needs of the growing numbers of the hungry - a hunger not caused by lack of supplies (such as was the case last year during the drought) but a lack of purchasing power?¹¹⁵ There is need for a National task force that would manage a social action programme that would set proper priorities, ensure effective implementation and monitoring and promote overall coordination with other programmes. Without such an effort, the poor will continue to be served more with words than with deeds, more with rhetoric than with action.

iii) **A National Forum for evaluating the structural adjustment programme:** Every day we hear calls from different parts of Zambian society to critically examine SAP and its economic and social effect on the Nation. The Government cannot simply ignore these calls or dismiss them as politically motivated. A number of reports have already been submitted, and a number of studies are under way, that give rise to substantial questions about the SAP. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and Zambia's many generous donors cannot be unaware of both the social suffering and the political instability that SAP is causing. In a democracy, major policies that strongly affect the well-being of the people must have the informed support of the people. Now is

the time to hold truly open and democratic debate on the SAP in order to ensure popular awareness of and participation in economic reforms that really benefit all the people both now and in the future.

Conclusion

28. We are indeed at a critical moment in the life of our new democracy. There is a great danger that Government policies, if not combined with clear social concern, will bring about a situation of "economic apartheid" in Zambia. The gap between rich and poor widens. The suffering of the poor increases daily. This is not only a moral scandal but also a dangerous threat to our democratic stability. In many instances, this is silent suffering that breeds a potential for anarchy. As we said in our 1990 Pastoral Letter during the crisis of the Second Republic, the anger and frustration of a suffering people can give rise to exploitive situations.

29. To promote the peace and justice in Zambia for which our people struggled in bringing about the democracy of the Third Republic, we must face up squarely to the current crisis that we are experiencing. It is a crisis of human suffering. We call upon the Government for stronger practical action. As pastoral leaders, we pledge ourselves and our Church, institutions and members to be involved as fully as possible in meeting this suffering of our people.

We must all "hear the cry of the poor"!

Lusaka, Zambia, 23 July 1993

Members of the Zambia Episcopal Conference

Bishop Dennis H. de Jong	Ndola Diocese (ZEC Chairman)
Archbishop Adrian Mung'andu	Lusaka Archdiocese
Archbishop James Spaita	Kasama Archdiocese
Bishop Medardo Mazombwe	Chipata Diocese
Bishop Abdon Potani, OFM.Conv.	Solwezi Diocese
Bishop Raymond Mpezele	Livingstone Diocese
Bishop Telesphore G. Mpundu	Mbala-Mpika Diocese
Bishop Paul Lungu, S.J.	Monze Diocese
Very Rev. Fr Joseph Musonda	Mansa Diocese
Archbishop Adam Kozlowieck, S.J.	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
Bishop James Corboy, S.J.	Retired Bishop of Monze

**OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
Mr. F.J.T. CHILUBA**

**RE: 1994 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

September 1994

This Open Letter was a reaction to the draft United Nations Action Plan that was to be discussed at the 1994 International Conference on Population. The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops (African Synod) had also expressed some objections of the recommendations of the draft UN Action Plan especially when it recommended the wider use of contraception in order to end unsafe illegal abortions, and to include sterilisation and abortion as birth control methods. The Synod urged the different local Churches to lobby their Governments not to accept such measures.

The Zambian bishops first of all appreciate the positive aspects of the UN Draft Action Plan. They appreciate the Plan's concern for sexual health. They praise all people involved in the prevention of the deadly HIV virus and those who care for the AIDS sufferers. Then they point out the aspects of the Action Plan they do not agree with. They do not agree with the use of the artificial means of regulating birth and they fear that this could include what they call "inadmissible and morally reprehensible recourse such as sterilisation and abortion." They further state that: "abortion is destruction of existing human life and cannot be offered as a responsible tool of population policy or a permissible means of family planning." The bishops do not agree that "better quality of life" is a supreme value which must be pursued at all cost and at the altar of which moral, spiritually and cultural values of human life must be sacrificed. They also totally reject the Plan's intention to

indiscriminately provide family planning services to the adolescents and the unmarried because this will promote licentiousness. The bishops strongly advocate the use of responsible parenthood and the use of Natural Family Planning method, which they point out, has been proven to be effective. The bishops are also not happy with the concept of the family contained in the Plan which they say is at variance with the understanding of the family as "the proper setting for the conception, birth and upbringing of children and is the cell or basic unit of society." They disapprove of the Draft Plan's statement: "family in all its various forms."

The bishops appealed to the Zambian Government to be critical of the programmes that set targets for and strictly advocate population decline in developing countries. They suggest that the West can support the seeming population problem by the transfer of technology through skills training to utilise resources more efficiently; support health institutions instead of promoting and funding free abortion on demand; writing off heavy debt, and that the international community stop the sale of arms to Africa.

Introduction

1. We, Bishops of the Catholic Church in Zambia, would like to bring to your attention our observations concerning the United Nations sponsored 1994 International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in September this year. We have read the Draft UN Action Plan on population control parts of which have been appearing in the international media, and we avail ourselves of this opportunity to communicate to you our response to the document.

Acknowledgement And Concern

2. We acknowledge that the draft UN Action Plan has some clear, positive goals and commendable objectives such as gender equity, reduction of the number of deaths related to pregnancy and child birth, infant and child morality rates, provision of primary school education for every child. If all Governments and organisations pursue these noble objectives the result would be better health, higher quality of life for people especially in developing countries.

3. The same Action Plan, however, proposes other objectives which pose a grave danger to humanity in general and to Third World populations in particular. Here we single out two objectives for special mention because of their openness to all forms of interpretation and therefore are potentially dangerous.

- i) "Improve access to reproductive care and better family planning services..."
- ii) "Other measures related to improving the quality of life with greater equity..."

4. As Church leaders in this Country we appreciate the concern for sexual health; we commend and fully support efforts to prevent, control and cure STDs. We acclaim all people involved in preventing the spread of the deadly HIV through education of the public and other morally acceptable ways and those who are caring for persons suffering from HIV infection and AIDS. In the past we have strongly emphasised the importance of responsible parenthood, maternal and childcare in our health care programmes and we will continue to do so in the future.

Implications Of The Open-Ended Statements

5. We are, however, extremely distrustful of the so-called "improved access to productive health care and better family planning services". Given the UN Draft's support for wider access to artificial contraceptives and an international effort to end unsafe, illegal abortions, this could only mean extending birth control measures to include inadmissible and morally reprehensible recourse such as sterilisation and abortion. Abortion is destruction of existing human life and cannot be offered as a respectable tool of population policy or a permissible means of family planning. The 1984 Mexico City International Conference on Population Statement and census on abortion have not even been mentioned by the Draft Action Plan justifying our suspicion that the Western view of permissive abortion is being forced on other Nations with different cultural and religious values in the name of "freedom of choice."

6. "Other measures related to improving the quality of life..." is an open ended statement which could be construed to mean that the end justifies the means thereby giving into and accommodating anything from the reasonable and respectable to the morally, spiritually and culturally outrageous. We cannot subscribe to the dangerous fallacy, which is implied here that "better quality of life" is the supreme value, which must be pursued at all costs and at the altar of which moral, spiritually, and cultural values of human life must be sacrificed. Besides, development or "better quality of life" is reduced to the narrow confines of material well-being, easier acquisition of wealth and greater availability of services.

7. We totally reject and denounce the draft Action Plan's obvious intention to provide "family planning services"

indiscriminately especially to adolescents and unmarried people thereby promoting licentiousness and sweeping aside the several moral, spiritual and social repercussions of early and wholesale sexual activity. There should be no sex before or outside marriage.

8. We are alarmed that the entire UN draft document is permeated by a strange and distasteful ideology of “reproductive rights” and lifestyle “right of choice” in matters of sexual behaviour. No corresponding stress is placed on the importance of moral responsibility of individuals and couples, to themselves and to society, thereby undermining, if not altogether negating, the good things it says about the rights and obligations of both men and women. Marriage, the foundation of family, so natural and universal is totally ignored and marginalized as peripheral and antiquated.

9. We share the concern of Governments and agencies with regard to rapid population growth in this Country and in other developing nations. However, we strongly advocate responsible parenthood as the most judicious and satisfactory approach to the problem. We want to emphasise that it is solely the responsibility of parents to make an enlightened decision as to the number of children they ought to have, using the means that respect the dignity of human nature and objective moral values, and taking into account the resources available to the couples for the proper upbringing of their offspring. We bemoan the deliberate sidelining of the Scientific Natural Family Planning method by the Draft Action Plan even though its effectiveness, reliability and integral well-being of its users have been scientifically proved in recent years.

THE CONCEPT OF THE FAMILY

10. In this International year of the Family (IYF) we find it incomprehensive that the UN Draft Action Plan opted to be equivocal with regard to the concept of family, as we understand, it is that union of persons established by marriage between husband and wife. It is the proper setting for the conception, birth and upbringing of children and is the cell or basic unit of society. Consequently we strongly disapprove of the Draft's Statement: "family in all its various forms" which could be expanded to include all forms of extramarital cohabitation or even, the elephant, and other endangered animal species.

11. We are also surprised if not alarmed that in this IYF nothing is said about saving the family and yet there are world wide campaigns to save the white rhino, the elephant, and other endangered animal species.

CALL TO THE GOVERNMENT

12. We are deeply distrustful of, and would like to urge the Zambian Government to critically examine, the intentions of Western Governments and International Agencies with the tendency to endorse strategies that set targets for and strictly advocate population decline in developing countries while at the same time encouraging and rewarding higher fertility rates in their own countries. We decry the linkage between receiving development assistance and the wholesale and uncritical adoption of unfavourable population policies. Political leaders and policy makers in the developing countries ought to be aware that behind seemingly benevolent and philanthropic programmes lie influential nations, International Agencies, Trans-National Corporations and

opulent individuals with hidden agendas, ulterior motives and vested interest totally at variance with our religious, moral cultural values and an affront to our human dignity and African identity. Against this background the objectives and accuracy of assessments of issues in a matter as complex as the global population situation, which varies not only from continent to continent but also from one region to another, cannot be taken for granted.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

13. In conclusion, we would like to re-emphasise that we support the call to check the rate at which our population is growing, but this, in the Zambian context, should not be over sensationalised, and lead to panic measures. Zambia, and Africa as a whole has a great resource potential to cope with its population growth, given the right conditions. The real genuine remedial support the West can offer to our seeming population problem is in the areas of:

- a) Facilitating the transfer of technology through skills training in order to enable us to utilise our abundant resources more efficiently to meet the needs of our growing population. This is in fact what is implied in Genesis 1:28 when God tells us to be fruitful and multiply and follows it with the command to “subdue the earth” God wants us to cultivate the land and grow enough food to support our population. In this sense, children ought to be considered as an asset or a resource and not as a liability destructive of the environment.
- b) Supporting our health education programmes instead of promoting and funding free abortion and on demand.
- c) Writing off our heavy “debt” burden that continues to choke our economics so that our resources are wholly directed towards the well being of our people.

d) Positive response to the call by the pontifical Commission for justice and peace on Arms trade (1) that the international community discontinue the sale of Arms to Africa. This promotes conflicts and diverts our energies from developing our resources.

14. In this International year of the Family, we appeal to you, Mr President, to rally to the defence of the Family by conveying to the United Nations and Leaders of other Governments especially in the developing countries our fears and anxieties. We earnestly urge you to ensure that the Zambian Delegation to the forthcoming Cairo Conference supports only a programme of action, which will ensure the protection of life, from conception to the grave, Marriage and Family, the respect for human dignity and our African values. We would not like to see Zambia's birthright cheaply auctioned away on the world market of "International Development Aid". What is at stake here is not just the institutions of marriage and family, to which the draft Action Plan pays lip service, but humanity itself is faced with a very serious menace. We want Zambia to play its rightful and leading role in defence of life, humanity and sanity.

Yours faithfully,

Rt. Rev. T.G Mpundu	Chairman, Bishop of Mbala/Mpika
<i>For the Catholic Bishop of Zambia</i>	
Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Most Rev. James Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Rt. Rev. Raymond Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Rt. Rev. Medardo Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Rt. Rev. Paul Lungu S.J.	Bishop of Monze, Vice Chairman
Rt. Rev Aaron Chisha	Bishop of Mansa
Rt. Rev. Dennis de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Very Rev. Fr Noel O'Regan SMA	Administrator, Solwezi Diocese
Most Rev. Adam Kozłowiecki	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
Rt. Rev. James Corboy S.J.	Retired Bishop of Monze

**ZAMBIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE
STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURE AND
FOOD SECURITY
1994**

One of the major elements of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in Zambia has been agricultural liberalisation, the removal of Government from an active role in production and marketing of food. But the consequences of the rapid and rigid implementation of this policy have been disastrous for the agricultural sector and painful for the majority of farmers in Zambia, the peasant farmers. The Bishops' Statement comes in the midst of the agricultural crisis and emphasises that production of food is not an ordinary economic activity but it has a special character as relating to the sustenance of life for the people. Hence it cannot be treated simply as another marketable item subject to the abstract laws of liberalisation. A strong section on theological perspectives, relying on scripture, is followed by specific policy recommendations that emphasise as the first priority of a good economy the provision of adequate food for the people.

Introduction

1. The Nation has once again entered a new crop marketing season, amidst a host of unresolved problems in the marketing of maize and other farm produce. Maize is a basic commodity that sustains the life of our people, and therefore a priority in economic policy. These problems amount to a punishment and marginalisation of the farmers. These problems also pose a serious threat to the ability of the Nation to feed itself, and constitute the cry of the farming community, especially of the poor peasants. This is the cry we want to address in this letter. This Statement is addressed to all Catholics and people of good will who are involved in policy making.

2. Over the past few months, we have been observing what has been happening to the economy, and particularly the agricultural sector on which we all depend for sustenance. The Episcopal Conference notes with concern the rapid and not well-planned withdrawal of the State from the regulation of the economy in Zambia. We have observed with particular concern the inadequate allocation of resources to the agricultural sector.

3. Lack of regulation has resulted in non-payment of some farmers, destitution of the rural producers, delays in the transportation of produce, unscrupulous business practices, and other associated problems explained below. If this situation continues unchecked, the likelihood of precarious food supplies, and volatile food prices will grossly compromise the food security of the Country.

Current Agricultural Policy

4. Agriculture, like other sectors of the economy in Zambia, has been liberalized under the on-going Structural Adjustment Program. But the National issue of agriculture and food security cannot be left to the whims of 'market forces.' The Government has the obligation to intervene and regulate the economy, more especially the agricultural sector, in order to ensure adequate supplies of food, and also to ensure just remuneration for all those who labour to feed the Nation.

5. Government policy for agriculture, and in relation to maize marketing, states that maize marketing is liberalized; everyone is free to engage in the procurement, storage processing and distribution of maize and its main by-product mealie meal. Whereas in the 1992/93 marketing season there were Government approved marketing agents and dealers, who were provided with

public funds to buy and distribute maize, in the 1994/95 guidelines there are no such agents. There are also some indications of several other measures such as the 'crop storage construction fund', maize and fertilizer revolving funds, lease of storage facilities, information, transitory support services, as well as "partial repayment of the outstanding marketing credit in the form of some of the maize stocks held by the principal Maize Buying Agents". The policy further states "in spite of the recent dry-spell affecting the overall maize supply position in the Country, the Ministry does not intend to divert from its mid-term goal to liberalize further the marketing process".

Consequences Of The Policy

6. Unfortunately the policy pronouncements on paper do not match the actual experiences on the ground. The experience of the marketing arrangements in the 1992/93 seasons can only be described as messy and disastrous. Blessed by sufficient rains, maize production, which was 5.4 million 90-kilogram bags in 1992 rose to 17.8 million bags, in 1993. This enabled the Nation to recover from the impact of the 1992 drought.

7. But this blessing was only to be wasted by the inadequacies of the liberalization policy, characterized by weak institutional capacity, and over-dependence on foreign aid. Consequently, farmers, especially the small-scale farmers, were put at a disadvantage. Many were cheated out of their maize by unscrupulous traders and dealers who for example exchanged maize for groceries at ridiculously low prices e.g. a fifteen kilogram tin of maize worth well over K1,500.00 exchanged for two tablets of soap worth only K400.00

8. Funds were inadequate as out of the total K50 billion required to market the 17.8 million bags only K15

million was allocated, in fact to acquire the strategic reserve of 2 million bags. And payments to farmers were badly managed as public funds given to buying agents, some of whom included public servants, were diverted into treasury bills, and farmers not paid for more than eight months after delivery of their produce. For example, by April 1994, K3.2 billion was still owed to farmers by the Principal Buying Agents for maize delivered during the last marketing season. These farmers were only holding promissory notes. Government apparently could not do anything to fill-in the gaps left by inept agents, until June 1994, when it promised to pay the farmers money owed to them by these agents.

9. Promissory Notes were an after-thought, and even these were issued too late to enable farmers to use them to acquire inputs for the next farming season. In some cases they were not even honoured on the day of maturity. Some farmers have not been paid as late as the start of the new crop-marketing season.

10. The floor prices fixed by Government and adopted by the dealers were too low to cover the production costs and did not reflect the market price for maize. Although there are no figures on spoilage, some of the crop has been spoiled due to lack of adequate storage facilities. And because of unclear policy, only very few commercial farmers have been able to take advantage of the new environment. Even these have been badly hit by lack of protection from apparently subsidized imports of maize, eggs, beef, poultry, wheat, rice, oil, flour, and other processed agricultural products. Some of these imports are in the form of food aid, despite the evident drawbacks in this form of meeting the shortfalls in local food production. The availability of food aid to a Country does more harm than good to the economy of the

Country receiving it. It depresses local producer prices, often to the extent that farming becomes unprofitable. Farmers leave the land and move to urban areas, leaving their Country increasingly dependent on handouts of food from the donors - who in many cases are not as charitable as they claim to be. Some have stockpiles of subsidized food produced by their subsidized farmers. Others seek to destabilise African Agriculture in order to destroy potential competition. Some may wish to exert political influence in receiving countries for reasons of their own.

11. Interest rates have remained stubbornly high. According to the National Farmers' Union, many large-scale farmers who borrowed from commercial banks have found it impossible to repay the remorselessly compounded increase and are technically bankrupt. Scores of farm workers have had to be laid off.

12. And because of the above situation further consequences and impacts are to be felt in the agricultural sector. For example, some of the farmers did not plant at all in the 1993 growing season; those who were still able to plant diverted from maize to other crops.

13. People in the rural areas who are already worse-off than their urban counterparts are now poorer as they could not afford to buy some of their own basic necessities, school requisites for their children, plough-shares and seed. Needless to say that the confidence people had in the pre-election campaigns and the promises of the MMD Manifesto has grossly eroded. This poses a danger of rapid deterioration of food reserves, unless dramatic steps are taken by Government and the Nation as a whole to restore the confidence of the farming community and overcome the cynicism created by the handling of the 1993 marketing arrangements.

Political Economy Of Government Policy On Maize Marketing

14. Today Zambia's economy is being shaped by the neo-liberal economics of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). In the political economy of neo-liberalism, involvement of the Government in such activities as maize marketing is not viewed as acceptable. The Government's only role is seen to be limited to providing an "enabling environment" within which the private sector can be operated according to the laws of the "free market".

15. It is the strict following of this model of the economy that led our Government to plan to withdraw completely from the business of maize marketing for the season of 1993. The Government sponsored maize marketing boards were disbanded. Private agents were allowed to assume the responsibility of purchasing, transporting, storing, and reselling the product of the abundant harvest which God had blessed us with following the disastrous drought of the previous season. But the intended operation of the private sector did not, in fact, occur efficiently and equitably, as we have noted above. What lessons can we learn in order to plan for the future?

16. One does not have to endorse the return to the old discredited system of the previous Government in order to raise a credible voice questioning the wisdom of the rapid and complete withdrawal of the State from maize marketing. As an absolute principle, the neo-liberal position that the Government should never be involved in the economy is simply untenable, as we have emphasized in our 1992 Pastoral Letter, *The Future is Ours*, "The State has a legitimate positive role in the economy, not simply in human conditions for workers and consumers alike..."

17. The market may be an effective instrument in regulating the economy, but it is not an absolute, we cannot ignore the very real constraints which private agencies face - capital formation, transport, logistics, etc. Nor can we ignore the responsibilities that the Government has to shoulder to promote the common good and to safeguard the well being of all our citizens.

Theological Framework For Viewing Agricultural Policy

18. When we Zambians speak of maize production and marketing, we are not speaking of simply any ordinary marketable item in our economy. We are speaking of the basic commodity, which sustains the life of our people. Food is the most important element in any economy. Consequently the arrangements to make food readily available to all people take on a very highest priority in a well-ordered society. Our political leaders must recognize and respond to this priority, independent of any political or economic ideology.

19. The scripture is filled with references to the responsibilities, which the human family has, to make sure that all are fed. To begin with, the land, which brings forth food for all, is seen as something sacred, a gift of God. God is the loving provider for all the people. From the Old Testament, we know that land is given as a promise to the Israelites who have been freed from slavery. This "promised land" is to be productive, with fruitful vines, rich olive trees, abundant harvests and fat cattle all being symbols of the happiness that God wants to give to the people.

20. In the New Testament, Jesus is close to the agricultural scene of his people, as is evident in the teaching of his parables. Many of his images of God's eternal

blessings come in the stories of banquets where people are well fed. And he shows the greatest gift of his love at the Last supper when he gives himself to us as food and drink.

21. Moreover, food also takes on special significance in the Bible in the instructions about care for the poor and the hungry. To ignore the hungry has always been considered a great offence by those who take seriously the biblical teaching. For instance, Job's friends suggested that his sufferings were due to his failure in this area; "You must have refused bread to the starving"" (Job 22:7). The Jews were obliged to leave something in the fields for the fatherless and for the widow" who were hungry (Deuteronomy 24: 15-17)

22. When we Christians evaluate the agricultural policy, therefore, we do so with a particular concern for the sacredness of the land, the fruitfulness that is a sign of God's blessings, and the call for justice and special concern for the poor. A policy can be judged as sound and acceptable if it enables farmers to have a just return for their labours and people have assured access to adequate food.

Policy Recommendations

23. It is not any agricultural policy that is good for development. It must serve people! We have noted above that the most important element in any economy is food. Indeed all well planned economies give some amount of protection to the farming community to ensure adequate supplies of food at all times. In proposing these policy recommendations, we are calling upon the Government, and indeed the whole Nation to ensure that appropriate policy is instituted and the right of all citizens to feed themselves is defended.

24. The first responsibility of the Government is to ensure that the Nation can feed itself. The related task is

to ensure a healthy level of international inter-dependence. Cheap food imports can destroy local agriculture and create dependence. A Nation that cannot feed itself cannot defend itself.

(a) First the Government should not relinquish its positive role in regulating the economy in order to ensure food security for the Nation, and also justice and equity in the marketing arrangements.

(b) Where as the economic quagmire can justify the need for structural adjustment our Country is going through, this change should be gradual, and we must desist from a blind faith in "market forces". A well-considered and new agricultural policy should be debated at the grassroots and in the parliament to ensure that the farming community takes part in formulating a more enabling agricultural policy.

(c) Government should protect farmers from unfair competition and ensure just reward for all those who labour to feed the Nation.

(d) Critical inputs, such as fuel and other energy services, agricultural equipment and spares, draft animals, fertilizers and seed should be positively discriminated as investment incentives, to reduce production costs, and achieve lower end-product prices.

(e) Decentralized agro-processing industries, such as hammer mills, together with decentralized energy services such as micro-hydro schemes, solar energy, biogas, etc., should be supported further to allow for multiplier effects and value added in the local regional economies.

(f) We also ask that information regarding markets, technologies and other development data should be readily available in the local languages and distributed

through the farmers' unions and associations, NGOs (including the Churches). In this way, all concerned may take an active part in formulating and implementing agricultural policy.

(g) We reiterate the call of the National Farmers' Union that no further donations of food should be received in future except in the event of famine, and then only in quantities sufficient to meet actual requirements.

(h) Imports of farm produce, including maize, should be restricted by the imposition of countervailing duties.

(i) The central bank should play a more active role and control the interest rates to make farming affordable.

Conclusion

25. The Country will experience a shortfall of about 4.0 million bags of maize in 1994, not so much out of natural causes like the drought, but because of the inadequacies of the agricultural policy and weak institutional capacity. The marketing arrangements for 1994 are not adequate to redress the chaotic situation of 1993.

26. Whereas the 1993 marketing arrangements have been poorly handled, affirmative action on the part of Government will be necessary to restore the eroded confidence. We urge all citizens to take the responsibility of ensuring that our Country can feed itself, and those labour to feed the Nation are justly rewarded for their efforts.

Signed:

Bishop T-G Mpundu
Chairman - Zambia Episcopal Conference
10th August 1994

NOTES:

- i) Food Security Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries,
Marketing Arrangements for 1992/3 and for 1994/5
- ii) Food Security Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries,
Marketing Arrangements for 1994/5
- iii) Hon R D S Penza, Minister of Finance, Budget Address 28th January 1994.
- iv) Jeffery Alwang and Paul B Siegal. "A Poverty Profile for Rural Zambia.
"World Bank Study, March 1994.

JOINT PASTORAL STATEMENT ON THE YEAR OF POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

*by The Christian Council of Zambia,
The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia,
The Zambian Episcopal Conference*

October 1995

The first elections in Zambia's Third Republic were contentious. The constitution was under review. To offer direction to the Nation in the last year before the elections, the Christian Church leaders in Zambia issued this "Joint Pastoral Letter on the Year of Political Responsibility". They called for a deepening of principles of democracy, if the democratic process was to bear fruit. They called for "leadership of service", modelled after Jesus Christ himself, who was of humble service in his earthly ministry (Jn 13:3-15). They called upon civil society to be vibrant enough to demand proper representation. Furthermore, the Church Leaders' call for a popular adoption of the constitution and a quick updating of the voters' register in preparation for the elections. The Church, on its part, committed itself to spearhead civic education, to inform and motivate citizens about their duty to vote, through sermons, crusades, prayer sessions, publications and media presentations.

Introduction

1. We, Church Leaders, extend the hand of friendship to all people of good will and, in a special way, to all Christians. We call upon you and urge you to pray to the Lord for guidance for the coming elections, both local

and National. May He help us make this a "Year of Political Responsibility". Now is the time for reflection and for seeking advice on our civic responsibilities. It is written in Proverbs 11:14, *"For want of guidance a people fails, safety lies in many advisers."*

Hopes and Challenges

2. We have many things to be thankful for since we changed from the one-party regime of the Second Republic to the multi-party democracy of the Third Republic. In contrast to many troubled African Nations, Zambia has been blessed with peace, and a measure of progress over the past four years. We are thankful to God for this. As we move into the fifth year of multiparty democracy, we urgently need to re-examine our political responsibility in order to promote the common good of all citizens of Zambia.

3. We appreciate that people have been free to form political parties and thus provide options for political participation. We regret, however, that most parties suffer from unhealthy internal divisions and the politics of personalities. These prevent them from rendering effective service to the people

The ruling party seems intolerant of open debate within its ranks, while most opposition parties fail to articulate clear alternatives to Government policies.

4. The growth of civil-society institutions (non-Government organisations) offers a wide range of participation to people. We applaud this as long as these organisations are not self-serving. We would like to see them assume greater role in informing people of their rights and responsibilities.

5. The Structure Adjustment Programme (SAP) has

brought some economic stability and opened up the possibilities for future growth. Its measures and implementation have caused great hardships for the poor who constitute the majority of our people. We therefore feel that SAP must be continually evaluated and reformed in terms of its effect on social justice and National well-being.

6. The importance to our Country of agriculture cannot be over-stressed. We are hopeful that the Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ASIP) will be implemented in such a way as to enable Zambia to feed itself.

Needs over the coming “Year of Political Responsibility”

7. The principles of democracy need to mature in our institutions and in our own personal political attitudes if the multiparty democracy of the Third Republic is to bear fruit.

8. The Government must ensure that the voters’ register is updated and that the new Constitution is adopted by popular consent. We strongly feel that to be effective important institutions like the Electoral Commission, the Anti-corruption Commission and the proposed Human Rights Commission should be independent of the executive and free from political interference.

9. On the part of leaders, there is a need for accountability to the public. Members of Parliament should visit their constituencies outside of the times of political campaigning. They should submit themselves to public forums where they can explain Government policies and can be questioned about their activities and performance.

10. On the part of citizens, they need to register as voters, to vote intelligently, and to demand proper

representation from the electoral officials. There is also need for greater honesty, tolerance of different views and rejection of tribalism and regionalism.

Christian Call to Political Responsibility

11. We Christians should be aware that politics is an area of great importance for promoting justice, peace, development and community among all Zambians. As Church leaders we are therefore greatly concerned that Christians are not exercising their civic privilege and right to vote. We share their anxiety that to a large extent their expectations have not been fulfilled by those who have been elected to positions of leadership. But this should not be a reason to abandon the right to vote altogether.

12. We appeal to all Christians to realise that in a democracy, voting is the way to improving Government, choosing responsible leaders and fulfilling civic duties. History has shown that one vote, your vote, can make a difference!

13. Leadership is for service. Jesus Himself showed us this by his own humble service, (Jn. 13:3-15). Hence it is binding on Christians to ensure that the right leaders are elected. We call on Christians not to shy away from engaging themselves in political social levels at all levels. The participation of Christians in political life is to be guided by the Gospel values of respect for human dignity, human rights, common good, social justice, solidarity, integral development, special concern for the poor and non-violence in resolving conflicts.

Agenda for "Year of Political Responsibility"

14. We propose that November 1995 to November 1996 be called a special "Year of Political Responsibility." All

Churches should focus on programmes to inform and motivate citizens to take steps to nurture our democracy. In a strictly non-partisan fashion, the Churches should assist the people to critically examine the institutions, attitudes, programmes and practices of all political parties, in an effort to improve on what we have achieved since 1991. By the activities of this *"Year of Political Responsibility"*, the Church will help the people to get more involved in the democratic process.

15. Programmes will include:

- a) Special sermons to focus on values and principles of the Churches' social teaching as applied to current Zambian needs (i.e., common good, hard work, option for the poor).
- b) Prayer sessions to ask for light and strength of the Holy Spirit in the forthcoming elections.
- c) "Crusade" style gatherings at various sport stadiums in the Country, to rally people, with instructions and prayer, around political responsibility.
- d) Information material prepared for use in Church communities, in schools and in other Church institutions.
- e) Media presentations of these ideas (TV, Radio and Press).
- f) Cooperation with other organisations to foster this agenda.

Conclusion

16. We need to consider our responsibility in building the Kingdom of God, "on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10). We know we cannot achieve this purely by our own efforts as it says in Psalms 127:1, "If the Lord does not build the house, in vain the masons toil, if the Lord does not guard the city, in vain the sentries watch."

17. But neither does the Kingdom automatically come in response to prayer. To help bring the Kingdom into our midst, we must both pray and work:

- i) We need to both pray and work for peace.
- ii) We must pray for justice but work to enact the laws that will remove all forms of oppression.
- iii) We should keep the poor in our prayers, but also work to provide them with opportunities for employment, for education and for decent living conditions.

18. We want this pastoral statement on the *"Year of Political Responsibility"* to be an encouragement and guide to all as we move forward to the local-Government and general elections. We prayerfully appeal to all citizens to maintain their traditional spirit of peace, respect and love towards one another.

Rev. Sampa Bredt
Fr. Ignatius Mwebe
Rev. Gabriel Schultz

Gen Sec. - CCZ
Sec. Gen. - ZEC
Chairman - EFZ

October 15, 1995

CALL FOR LEGITIMISING THE NEW ZAMBIAN CONSTITUTION

3rd October 1995



*In the next three Pastoral Letters, namely: **Call For Legitimising the New Zambian Constitution** (1995), **Church Leaders' Statement on the Constitutional Debate** (1995), and **Open Letter to the President and Members of Parliament** (1996), the Catholic bishops, and other Christian leaders, sought to offer a moral guide on what was to be done regarding the adoption of the amended constitution. The concern of the Bishops was the Government intention of rushing the constitution through parliament without exhausting consultations with the general public. The constitution the Government wanted to rush through parliament had contentious issues, which needed further debate.*

When they made this call, the Church leaders emphasised that the constitution, being a document of the highest importance needed to be recognised and respected by all citizens. This could only happen if the citizens viewed the document as theirs by a

deliberate process that allowed the people's input to be officially recognised. This is why the process recommended by the Mwanakatwe Commission, of a constituent assembly, was a necessary condition towards popularising the constitution. According to the Church leaders, this was the only process that would deal adequately with the contentious issues that needed a broad national consensus before adoption.

In spite of these appeals the Government used its majority in parliament to amend the constitution in a manner that marred the 1996 elections when UNIP boycotted the elections.

1. We, Church leaders, have listened to the people's apprehension about the Government's white Paper, regarding the adoption of the New Constitution. We wish to add our voice to the call of how best the proposed constitution can be legitimised.

2. The Constitution of a Country is a national document of the highest importance. As the supreme law of the land, it must be recognised and respected as embodying the sovereign will of the majority of the people. The mode of adoption can either facilitate or obstruct this popular acceptance and recognition.

3. We share the apprehension of the people for the following reasons:

- i) Ratification only by Parliament would deny the citizenry participation in the wide public debate, clarification and editing necessary to make the document truly a popular expression.

- ii) There is danger of a repeat of what occurred after the Mvunga Commission's Constitution in 1991, when the new Government immediately began a process for writing a new constitution. What would stop the next Government from repeating this process, which is very

expensive and confusing to the general public and lessens the respect due to the Constitution?

iii) There are sections in the Draft constitution, which are highly controversial, and therefore deserving of widespread debate that would contribute to decisions regarding the final wording.

iv) We feel that the members of the Mwanakatwe Constitution Review Commission have done what was required of them notwithstanding the anxieties, which characterised the whole process. We give full support to the procedures they proposed concerning the adoption of the Constitution, that is, by subjecting it to the scrutiny of a Constituent Assembly (whose members will be as per recommendations in the Mwanakatwe Report) and finally passing it through a Referendum. This is the only way the Country will come up with a document that will be viewed as legitimate by the majority of the citizens and be able to stand the test of time. Simply offering the Constitution to the Parliament, as suggested by the white paper, is unacceptable as a forward step in the process of democratisation of Zambia's Third Republic.

Rev. G. Schultz
Chairman - E.F.Z

Rev. V Sampa Bredt
Fr. General Secretary -
CCZ

Ignatius Mwebe
Secretary General -
ZEC

Issued in the *Times of Zambia*, October 3, 1995

CHURCH LEADERS' STATEMENT ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE

1st December 1995

In this follow-up Statement, to the 'Call for Legitimising the Zambian Constitution' that was co-signed by the three Christian Church mother bodies, the Christian Council of Zambia and the Zambia Episcopal Conference, went further to point out the actual contentious issues emanating from the work of the Mwanakatwe Review Commission. The Church leaders took the opportunity to reiterate their opposition to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation finding its way into the constitution. As far as they were concerned this was adequately catered for in the Bill of Rights (Part III) of the Constitution that deals with the various rights and freedoms, among them is the freedom of worship and conscience.

1. We have listened to the debates, which have been going on since the publication of the Mwanakatwe Constitution Review Report. The growing interest in the constitution is a healthy development, and a sign of the Nation's commitment to democracy. However debates in the press and on radio and television are not enough. The Constitution affects the lives of all Zambian citizens, and it ought to be discussed at all levels of society. Well-informed discussion will lead to the new constitution eventually acquiring the wide popular support, which it will need if it is to stand the test of time. For people to form a mature judgement on the issue involved, they need proper information. We therefore feel that the Mwanakatwe Constitutional Review Report should be widely circulated and possibly translated into the main vernacular languages.

2. We are deeply concerned about several key issues such as:

- * The Mode of Adoption of the Constitution
- * The Bill of Rights
- * The qualifications for Presidency
- * The separation of powers to ensure checks and balances
- * The independence of investigative Commissions
- * The inclusion of the Statement declaring Zambia a Christian Nation in the preamble to the Constitution.

3. We urge these sensitive issues be given wider debate and consultation. Therefore we call upon the Government to postpone tabling the white paper on the Draft Constitution in Parliament. The constitutional debate should be de-linked from the forthcoming elections. This will allow for a wider, in-depth discussion of the Constitution throughout all sections of Zambian society.

4. If such wider consultation is not permitted, we fear that the authoritative status of the constitution could be lessened. Its legitimacy as the fundamental law of the Zambian people might even be called into question. If the new Constitution is rushed through parliament without taking the time necessary for the people of Zambia to consider all the issues, it is unlikely to last any longer than its predecessors. Such a rush would be incompatible with the democratic principles of the Third Republic.

5. As Church leaders, we appreciate the concern of the MMD Government that Christian values should guide the affairs of the Nation. This includes an increased commitment to honesty, hard work, justice and concern for the poor. We also appreciate the expression of tolerance for all other religions that has been repeatedly expressed by the Government.

6. However we do not agree with the position in the Government's White paper that the preamble to the Constitution should state that Zambia is a Christian Nation. Rather, we accept the position expressed by the report of the Mwanakatwe commission that the rights of "Christianity or any other religion could be safely secured without any form of declaration" (see the report by Government printers 3.5) Zambia should not adopt a State religion or give Christianity a privileged constitutional recognition.

7. We have this position for a number of reasons:

* Although Christianity may be the religion of the majority of Zambians, there are nevertheless many dedicated Zambians who profess other faiths. The constitution of the Country belongs as fully to these citizens as it does to those who profess Christianity. No loop-hole should be left which might, at some future date, lead to non-Christian Zambians being regarded as second-class citizens, or even excluded from public office.

* Freedom of worship and religion is sufficiently safe-guarded in the current constitution. Any new Constitution must maintain the same safeguards. Freedom of conscience in religious matters is a fundamental human right.

* It is the duty of Government to protect this fundamental human right. There is a danger of division in the Nation when specific religious beliefs are accorded privileged status or preferential treatment.

* Authentic religious practice will not be fostered by this declaration. It could lead to the abuse of religion for purely political ends, and even bring discredit on the name 'Christian'. Abuses, which could potentially arise, include the encouragement of prejudices against non-

Christian, political use of the Declaration to favour one party over another, an increase in religious intolerance, and even the inflaming of conflicts similar to those, which haunted European countries for centuries.

* We believe that neither the majority of the citizens of Zambia, nor even the majority of Christians in Zambia, wish to have such a declaration associated with the Constitution of the Country. Implicit evidence of this is already found in the Mwanakatwe report, which noted, "the majority of petitioners did not in fact favour the provision in the Constitution making Zambia a Christian Nation".

8. If Zambia is to be a Christian Nation, we strongly believe that this will come about, not by reason of a declaration or by a statement in the Constitution, but by reason of Christians living their faith to the fullest. Here the Churches have an important role to play. They need to promote among the citizens the strictly non-partisan virtues of political responsibility and accountability. They should also foster honesty, hard work, concern for the poor and commitment to the common good.

9. The Christian Churches will promote the democratic institutions of our Government, and support the building up of a genuinely democratic spirit throughout the Country. This will contribute greatly toward ensuring that Christianity remains a living reality in Zambia, and does not simply become a political slogan or a religious motto.

1st December 1995

Signed: Bishop T.G. Mpundu
Chairman (Zambia Episcopal Conference)

Bishop Clement H. Shaba
(Christian Council of Zambia)

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

26th April 1996

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia decided to take the issue of the constitution further by appealing directly to the legislators and the President. This open letter was issued in the hope that parliament would seize the opportunity to open the debate to further public scrutiny instead of treating it as a private issue top topic be agreed upon by members of parliament only. The Bishops appealed earnestly that the matter was so important to the future of Zambia that it was necessary that the debate in parliament be postponed to give more time for wider debate.

1. The Easter Season offers Christians an opportunity to reflect on that great gift of the Risen Jesus, his gift of peace (John 20:19). This is the Saviour's gift that brings peace to our individual heart, our families and neighbourhoods, to our Nation. But it is a peace that we must embrace and work with, so that it comes fully alive in our midst today. That is why Jesus said so emphatically, "Blessed are the peace makers" (Matthew 5:9), for he knew that it is often a difficult and challenging task to work for peace.

2. In an effort to contribute to the promotion of the peace that we all desire so strongly here in Zambia, we write this letter to address the important issue of the adoption of changes in the fundamental law of the land, our Constitution. Since the inauguration of the Third Republic four and half years ago, the topic of constitution review has been an important point for expert study, public discussion and political debate. The Mwanakatwe Commission Report, the Government's White Paper, the proposals of various NGOs and other interest groups, and now the Government's bill of proposed amendments have all serv-

ed both to highlight the substantial areas of agreement and the significant differences of opinion.

3. Recent months have been particularly lively in the debate over the contents of constitutional changes and the mode of adopting those changes. We ourselves, joining our sisters and brothers in leadership positions with the Christian Council of Zambia and the Evangelical Fellowship, have on several occasions contributed to the debate. As we stated in our Joint Pastoral Statement, of 15th October 1995, on the Year of Political Responsibility, 'the principles of democracy need to mature in our institutions and in our personal political attitudes if the multiparty democracy of the Third Republic is to bear fruit' (#7)

4. Because of the need for time to nurture the principles of democracy that will be incorporated into our Constitution, we strongly believe that it will be in the interest of the peace we all desire and the justice we all seek that the current draft bill be withdrawn from parliament until after the general elections later this year. Why do we say this?

(a) We recall President Chiluba's pledge to the Law Association of Zambia on 30 March 1996 that adequate time would be given for full popular discussion of the changes in the Constitution. In his own words he said "The publication of the White Paper and even a Bill for presentation to Parliament do not close or pre-empt the debate on the Constitution which we all agree is the fundamental Law of the land and which must embody the widest consensus, if it is to stand the test of time. Even at the very last moment I can assure you that the Government's door will remain ever open." With Local Government and General elections pending, we feel this will be a crowded year. We feel time will not be adequate to get the

widest consultation necessary to come up with a popular consensus for our fundamental Law.

(b) We applaud the work of those Members of Parliament who have made an effort to visit their constituencies to explain the issues and listen to various viewpoints so that they can freely and intelligently debate the draft bill when Parliament resumes sitting on 30 April 1996. But we must be honest and say that we have heard from many of our people that they have had no chance to discuss the Constitution with their MPs, that translations and explanations in the local languages have not been available, and that the apathy that sadly marked the voter's registration process has also marked the debate over the constitutional issues.

(c) We feel that the constitutional debate has not in fact reached the grassroots and that ordinary people, especially those in rural areas, need time to participate actively in this most important debate.

(d) There are several very substantial issues that are both controversial and far-reaching in their implications and hence need much more public discussion before the Parliament takes up debate and decisions on any Constitutional Bill. Surely the MPs will agree that they need adequate time for diligent and intelligent investigating into these issues and widespread consultations with their constituencies. Among them are:

i) Part VI, Articles 91-99 of the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Bill, 1995, deals with the Judicature and contain several clauses that have raised serious questions from the Law Association of Zambia regarding the independence of the judiciary.

ii) Part VI, Article 91 (1) appears to limit the powers of courts in considering constitutional challenges to Legislative Acts.

iii) Part IV, Article 34 (3), deals with the qualifications of the presidency and contains the requirement that both parents be Zambians by birth. Because of its relevance to one particular candidate in this election year, this clause is highly contentious.

iv) The Preamble includes the declaration of Zambia as a "Christian Nation" a position that needs considerably more legal debate and theological clarification.

v) Other issues need in-depth discussion such as the improvement of the Bill of Rights (as suggested by the Mwanakatwe Commission), the independence of important commissions on Elections, Anti Corruption, Human rights, appointment of ministries. Etc.

5. Given the importance of seeking wide consensus on these and other issues before the Constitution is amended, it seems wise to us to postpone consideration of the Draft Bill. Time is not adequate to go through the process of serious debate prior to elections. There is the added advantage that popular opinion can be sought by making the constitutional issues matters of political debate and therefore grounds for casting votes one way or another in the elections of Members of Parliament.

6. There really is no disadvantage to postponing the consideration of the Constitution until after elections, since elections can be held very smoothly under the 1991 Constitution. The only argument in favour of rushing the Draft Bill through might be that its enactment would exclude one individual from running for President. But we would take seriously President Chiluba's word at the press conference of March 13, 1996, that the specific clauses of the Draft are not aimed at specific individuals.

7. We urge that the Constitution Amendment Bill be withdrawn from consideration by Parliament until after

the elections. We pledge that the institutions and structures of our Church will be used to cooperate with Government, NGO's and other interested groups in promoting widespread circulation and discussion of the Constitution. In this way we will ensure a fundamental law of the land that will stand the test of time because it has been adopted and enacted by the true consensus and consent.

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

April 26, 1996

Rt. Rev. Telesphore-George Mpundu	Bishop of Mbala/Mpika
Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Most rev. James Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Most. Rev Adam Kozlowiecki, SJ	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
Rt. Rev. Dennis de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Rt. Rev. James Corboy, SJ	Retired Bishop of Monze
Rt. Rev. Medardo Mazombwe	Bishop of Chipata
Rt. Rev. Raymond Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Rt. Rev. Paul Lungu, SJ	Bishop of Monze
Rt. Rev. Aaron Chisha	Bishop of Mansa
Rt. Rev. Noel O'Regan, S.M.A.	Bishop of Solwezi

CALLED TO BE THE FAMILY OF GOD

A Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Zambia to launch the Five Year African Synod Programme

May 1996

Following the 1994 Africa Synod, which had come up with the new mode of the Church in Africa, namely, the Church-as-family, the Bishops of Africa recommended that on the count down to the great Jubilee Year 2000, this theme would be looked at from various angles. This pastoral letter was issued to mark the launch of this five-year African Synod programme. The Bishops reflect on what it means to be called to be the Church as family of God. The pastoral letter is a call on all Catholics to journey together in the work of evangelisation so that the Word of God can permeate all levels of our existence, in our families, in our Christian Communities, in our Parishes, and in deed in the whole Nation.

Greetings in the Lord to our Sisters and Brothers in the Catholic Community of Zambia!

1. We begin today throughout our Country an important moment in the historic process of the African Synod. The Synod was an assembly of bishops from all over Africa and the wider Church that gathered in Rome two years ago to work on the great theme of "Evangelisation toward the year 2000 you shall be witness".

2. We Catholics in Zambia rejoice as we are now asked to continue our journey together in bringing the message and hope of the African Synod home to our families, small Christian communities, parishes, neighbourhoods and Nation. As the servant of Jesus Christ and as your servants, we bishops write this letter now to you to encour-

age you all to join with us in making the Synod decisions and directions come fully alive in our midst over the next few years.

3. We write with hearts filled with confidence, because we recall the generosity and enthusiasm of Catholics during our 1991 celebration of the Centenary of the Church in Zambia and during the subsequent period of preparation for the African Synod. During that preparation period we reflected together on the theme of evangelisation and examined the topics of proclamation, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and communication.

4. We also write with hearts filled with anticipation, because we know that the task ahead will be challenging and demanding, calling upon the commitment by all of us, if the spirit of the African Synod is to come fully alive in the Zambian Church.

God's Family

5. The central message of the African Synod and the Guiding idea for the task of evangelisation is the "Church as God's family" This was strongly expressed by the bishops gathered in Rome in April 1994 and clearly repeated by John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Church in Africa*, delivered during his September 1995 visit to Africa.

6. The Church as the "family of God" is a beautiful image that is very appropriate to Africa, for it emphasises:

- a) care for others
- b) solidarity
- c) warmth in human relationships
- d) acceptance
- e) dialogue and trust

7. We know that the first Christian communities thought of themselves as God's Household, God's family; for we read in the new Testament "you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with saints and also members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19) "you will know how to behave in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15)

8. But to be a member of God's family is much more than being a member of a club or a political party. It is a way of life, a following of Jesus. It involves profound conversion, a turning of one's life over to the Lord and the Lord's ways. Because it is worthwhile, it will require some work.

Five-Year Programme

9. That is why we bishops have decided to launch today a co-ordinated five year programme to involve all Zambian Catholics in a spiritual renewal that will help us to respond effectively and creatively to the call to be God's Family. During this time we look at the major themes of the Synod with programmes of reflection, education, animation, action, and prayer.

1996: Introducing the Church as Family

With this Pastoral Letter and our special liturgies today, we are launching the period of the Synod implementation and beginning programmes to inform the people about the synod and to prepare training and education materials.

1997: The Caring Family

This year will look especially at the issues of the care of the sick, aged and orphans, the promotion of women and girls, youth training and promotion of justice and peace, and development.

1998: The African Family

Marriage and family will be our special focus during this year, with a look at the sacraments, initiation, and the challenge of witchcraft and spirit possession.

1999: The Missionary Family

As the Church of Jesus Christ, we have his Good News to share with others so we will this year look at the task of evangelisation and proclamation, the work of inter-religious dialogue and ecumenism, and the use of the means of social communication.

2000: The Celebrating Family

As the "new millennium" opens up we will rejoice in the presence of Christ our Saviour in celebrations held especially at the level of our families, small Christian communities and parishes.

Political Responsibilities

10. As we move into this grace-filled period of the implementation of the African Synod here in Zambia, we know that this is also a period of serious social difficulties, economic suffering and political challenges. We cannot ignore these realities, hiding from them in Church affairs and distracting ourselves from our public responsibilities. Indeed in the face of many problems, we need to cry out with full confidence in God's great love: "The lord is our help and our shield. In him do our hearts find joy. We trust in his holy name". (Psalm 28:7)

11. We take this occasion to remind you especially of our responsibilities during this election year of 1996. As our major Church leaders emphasised in their joint pastoral statement of 15 October 1995, this is a "year of political

Responsibility" when the participation of Christians in political life is to be "guided by the Gospel values of respect for human dignity, human rights, common good, social justice, solidarity, integral development, special concern for the poor, and non-violence in resolving conflicts," We appeal particularly to our leaders to reject any forms of violence and manipulation of people, especially of youth.

12. We must pray for the light and strength of the Holy Spirit in the forthcoming elections and work diligently to maintain the spirit of peace, respect and love towards one another that is a sign we are truly members of God's family.

Conclusion

13. The centre of our evangelisation efforts over the next few years is Jesus Christ, our elder brother in God's family. As we proclaim Jesus, we do so with strong prayers for authentic faith and generous commitment. Today the whole Catholic Church in Zambia asks God's blessing on our efforts to remain "one in mind and hearts" (Acts 4:32) in our implementations of the African Synod.

May God bless you all!

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

May 1996

Rt. Rev. Telesphore-George Mpundu	(Chairman) Bishop of Mbala/Mpika
Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Most Rev. James Spaita	Archbishop of Lusaka
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Rt. Rev. Noel O'Regan	Bishop of Solwezi
Rt. Rev. Aaron Chisha	Bishop of Mansa

Questions for Discussion in Small Christian Communities

1. Do you think "Family of God" is a good image of the Church in Zambia? Why? Why not?
2. How do you experience the Church at your local level, both positively and negatively?
3. What would you most like to see happen in the Zambian Church in the next few years?

BUILDING FOR PEACE

A pastoral letter From the Catholic Bishops of Zambia in view of the 1996 Elections 27th October 1996

Just before the elections took place in 1996, the Bishops wrote this pastoral letter to remind the citizens of the importance of elections. They recalled the issues they raised in the "Joint Pastoral statement On the "Year of Political Responsibility"

"Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called Children of God" (Mt 5:9)

To all Catholics and all loving people of Zambia: We wish you the grace and peace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. As pastors of the Church and therefore teachers in matters of morals and doctrine, we feel duty bound to give guidance to the Nation as the National elections draw near. We have listened to the concerns of the people and their desire to see democracy and good governance succeed.

1. Just five years ago, The Zambian people received a great grace from God. This grace was the peaceful transition to multiparty democracy after free elections. This was not the grace of the triumph of one party over another, or the replacement of one leader by another. No, it was the grace of the triumph of the Zambian people who with God's help demonstrated a mature and dedicated commitment to democratic Government.

2. Now, five years later, our Nation moves towards another election to choose leaders for the future. We Catholic Bishops are deeply concerned with the current mood in the Country and the attitude of many of our citizens. During a process of wide consultation across the Country, we have heard people express fear about possible violence during the elections, apathy about the use-

fulness of voting, and questions about the honesty of the electoral process. We directed the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) to conduct non-partisan civic education programmes throughout Zambia. During these sessions, people have made known their concerns and have asked for guidance from the Church.

3. So we write this letter to all Catholics and people of Zambia, mindful of the importance of maintaining and strengthening democratic structures and attitudes if we are to enjoy a peaceful and developing future in our Country. We recall at the outset the strong emphasis given in the Church's social teaching about values of democracy. As Pope John Paul II, in one of his encyclicals, has said, "The Church values the democratic system in as much as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and of replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate ...Authentic democracy is possible only in a State ruled by (just) law, and on the basis of a correct conception of the human person". (John Paul II, *One Hundred Years*, 1991, #46)

4. In the joint Pastoral Statement issued on 15 October 1995 by the Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and the Zambia Episcopal Conference, we called upon all Christians to mark a "Year of Political Responsibility" leading up to the National elections. Many Churches have responded to the invitation of the statement: "In a strictly non-partisan fashion, the Churches should assist the people to critically examine the institutions, attitudes, programmes and practices of all political parties, in an effort to improve on what we have achieved since 1991" (14) We encourage Christians to

review that Statement and the teaching it presents about the responsibility of all leaders and citizens to serve the good of the whole Nation.

5. In this Pastoral Letter, we want to address three very important points from the perspective of the Bible and the social teaching of the Church. We speak on these points as religious leaders of communities striving to be faithful to the love and justice of Jesus Christ.

What Constitutes Peaceful, Free And Fair Elections?

6. To have peaceful, free and fair elections, certain conditions have to prevail in our Country and in our hearts. There ought to be a conducive atmosphere. The major players have to agree on the conditions under which these elections would be held. The contestants have to conduct themselves in a manner that does not put others at an unfair disadvantage. There ought to be transparency in the organisation of the elections.

7. We therefore urge all Christians to ensure that political parties keep to pertinent issues, for example, service to the poor, social welfare, agricultural policy or economic recovery, during their campaign. Those who campaign outside these issues - people only interested in insulting their opponents - are not promoting peaceful elections, and should not be voted for. Christians should demand that all political parties publicly denounce violence of any sort. Constructive dialogue should be encouraged at all times on key electoral issues, such as the constitution, the electoral act and voter registration. All parties should have equal access to the publicly owned media, and the media have a duty to report political campaigns fairly and accurately.

8. In the light of these necessary conditions, we make a special appeal to the Government and to the ruling party to realise that they have a serious responsibility. As facilitators of the election, they should ensure that the concerns of all key players are adequately addressed. We also make an appeal to the opposition parties, about the need for them to be open and constructive in participating in the electoral process and in addressing the issues above.

Criteria For Choosing Good Leaders

9. Good elections require intelligent and responsible participation by all voters. We therefore encourage all Christians to get themselves informed of the manifestos from various political parties. These manifestos are supposed to have the programme of action that the parties propose to follow in order to serve the good of all people. A sound manifesto should articulate achievable programmes that will enhance the development of our Country and our own well-being. Hence we should be able to decide to vote for the party that has a programme we see as the best for us as a Nation.

10. The candidates for political parties will be committed to the manifesto of their party as well as to their personal vision of their constituencies. Candidates should therefore be evaluated on their capacity to implement both their party's manifesto and their personal vision. Those who offer themselves for re-election ought to be evaluated against the record of what they have or have not achieved. We should carefully ask ourselves how they performed while they were in office. Did they fulfil their promises? Did they offer quality service to all the people and not only those who voted them into power? Were they available to listen to the concerns of the people and

were they selfless in responding to the needs of all, especially of the poor? Those who have not yet held office should be carefully evaluated in terms of their competence and their reputation for honesty and selfless dedication to the common good.

11. Drawing from the Social Teaching of the Church, the qualities that candidates for political office should have are the following: professional competence, courage to speak out the truth, concern for social justice, desire to work for the common good instead of self enrichment, disposition to use power for service, especially service of the poor and under-privileged, openness to dialogue, good moral standing, transparency and accountability to the electorate. Above all, Christians should realise that they have the moral responsibility to vote for candidates who follow the example of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve (Jn 13: 2-17) and who emptied himself for the good of every one (Philippians 2:5-11).

The Role Of The Church In Strengthening Democracy

12. As a Church, we are always conscious of our role in society. We know that we must always endeavour to play our role of being the conscience of the nation. In fulfilling this role, we must strive to ensure that the gospel values of love, reconciliation, tolerance, social justice, fairness, the common good, equality and above all special concern for the poor are promoted in our political and economic life. This is why we always feel compelled to speak out and encourage leaders of whatever party and all citizens to commit themselves wholeheartedly to these values.

13. Civic education is one exercise in which we can play an active role to promote gospel values as the basis for

political life. In matters relating to the elections and the promotion of democracy, we urge all Catholics to acquaint themselves with, and make full use, of the non-partisan civic education material prepared by the CCJP.

Final Appeal

14. It is important for all Zambians to realise that voting is one of their fundamental human rights. Indeed voting is a Christian duty. It is the means by which citizens can peacefully and freely choose their leaders.

15. We pray that all citizens enter the elections with a spirit of honesty- avoiding bribes and/or cheating. We also pray that all voters may have, at heart, the spirit to build for peace and reconciliation avoiding all forms of violence. As St. Paul writes to the Romans: "Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody" (Rm 12:18).

May God bless you all!

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

27th October 1996

Rt. Rev. T-G Mpundu (Chairman)	Bishop of Mbala- Mpika
Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop of Lusaka
Most Rev. James Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Most Rev. Adam Kozlowiecki, S.J.	Retired Archbishop of Lusaka
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THE CHURCH AS A CARING FAMILY

A Pastoral Letter to all Catholics by the Bishops of Zambia on the 1997 Theme for Synod Implementation March 1997

Coming back to the African Synod's theme of the "Church as God's family", which was launched in May 1996, it was then that 1997 was declared as the "Year of the Caring Family".

Particular themes for the 1997 theme included "Care for the sick, aged and orphans, the promotion of women and girls, youth training, promotion of justice and peace and development".

It is in keeping with this theme that this letter was written. It was meant to bring to the attention of all Catholic Christians the challenge for 1997 in much more detail. The challenge is to look at the context of the Church in Zambia today and search for the occasions on which each and everyone can also accompany Jesus, as the people of Nain did, in being compassionate to other people.

In the text from the Gospel according to St. Luke, which the Bishops quote there is a story of a widow who loses her only Child and Jesus brings him back to life. This is a story, they say in which Jesus reminds us of 'the vision of a Church that is obedient, loving, full of solidarity, and above all compassionate'. This is a Church that is built on the model of a "caring family".

Introduction

"Jesus went to a town called Nain, together with his disciples and a large number of people. When he was near the gate of the town, there was a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother and she was a widow. A considerable number of the town people were with her, 'don't cry'". (Luke, 7:11-14)

Dear brothers and sisters in the Catholic faith. We greet you in the name of our lord Jesus Christ, the true model of the Church.

1. The text above challenges us to look at our Church here in Zambia with the eyes of faith. Jesus looked at the woman, felt compassion for her and said, "don't cry" Aren't we, as a Church, also called upon to look at the situation we are living in, and repeat the compassionate words of Jesus, "don't cry", and thus instil a sense of hope in the thousands of people who are suffering in our society? Jesus reminds us of the vision of a Church that is obedient, loving, full of solidarity, and above all compassionate. This is a Church that is built on the model of a "caring family".

2. Keeping in line with the African Synod's theme of the "Church as God's family", in May 1996 we launched a challenging five year programme of implementing this vision. We declared 1997 as the "Year of the Caring Family". We suggest that the particular themes for 1997 should include "Care for the sick, aged and orphans, the promotion of women and girls, youth training, promotion of justice and peace and development".

3. We are therefore writing this letter to bring to your attention in much more detail our challenge for this year as Catholic Christians. The challenge is to look at the context of the Church in Zambia today and see the occasions on which we can also accompany Jesus, as the people of Nain did, in being compassionate to other people.

Zambia Today

4. The Zambian family is today confronted with numerous and complex traditional, social, political and economic problems.

5. On the social front, Government statistics indicate that out of an estimated population of 9 million, 76% of our people are living in abject poverty. These are people who each day cannot meet the basic need to lead a decent human life. The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) continues to inflict untold suffering on the majority of Zambians. Many people are put out of employment with little or no retrenchment packages at all. The situation is aggravated by the lack of a comprehensive social security scheme. Consequently, in the face of rising costs of basic goods and services, many families are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.

6. Health reforms have meant an increasing cost of medical care. With the emphasis on cost sharing between Government and the users of health facilities, more and more people are becoming alienated from health services. They are unable to care for members of the family who are sick! We see on our streets mentally disturbed people and many other handicapped people. Many in our society do not accept these people as full members of our families and do not bother about their situation.

7. In our school system, lack of appropriate education and training facilities and adequate guidance about career opportunities has aggravated the situation of the youth in Zambia today. Hence each day we see a growing number of street children and school dropouts just roaming about without any hope for their future.

8. As regards women, it is common knowledge that in times of great poverty women suffer much more than men. They have increased working hours in order to feed their families with scarce resources. They care for the children, the sick and aged. They face the prospect of widowhood aggravated by the cruel injustice of property grabbing.

9. In the area of family life, there has been an erosion of family values of stability and respect for the transmission of life that characterise our Zambian and Christian heritage. In this context the true meaning of the sexual act as an expression of love between a man and a woman in marriage and open to the transmission of life is lost sight of. For many in our society, sexual activity is entered into for pleasure alone without any consideration for the life of the child that may be conceived.

10. The consequences of this are the increase of pre-marital sexual relations among the young people with the increased number of teenage pregnancies. Furthermore, the stability of marriages is affected by the extra-marital sexual activity. This irresponsible sexual activity has greatly contributed to the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. An estimated 15% of the nearly four million adult Zambians are said to be HIV positive. The hardest hit are often the energetic and productive people, leaving very few to care for the aged and orphans. A truly shocking indicator of our situation is that life expectancy has dropped from 54 years to a decade ago to 45 years today. Sadly, many in our society have attempted to avoid their responsibilities by taking recourse to unacceptable methods of contraception, and worse still abortion. But these attempts do not solve the problems. They instead aggravate them.

11. In spite of this gloomy picture, we recognise that there are people, from the Church and wider society, who are striving to live faithful and generous lives. These people not only promote loving values in their own families, but also assist those in need around them. We take special note of those engaged in "Home Based Care" programmes for the sick, those caring for orphans, hard working mothers who look after and feed their families as best as they

can, and people working for development, justice and peace, and other programmes to improve the conditions of our society in Zambia today.

The Church As The Caring Family Of God

12. The image of the Church as God's Family was chosen by the African Synod in 1994 as the guiding ideal for the evangelisation in Africa. This image emphasises care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust. This expresses very well the true character of the Church that we all strive to build here in Zambia.

13. The Church in Africa should be understood as a Family in the light of the Gospel. All the baptised Christians are the Body of Christ who share the same life of Christ. By freely shedding his blood, Christ freely laid down his life for remission of sins. He instituted God's new covenant with his redeemed people, his Church. Christ did not only shed his blood for the remission of sins, but also for the communication of life, the divine life of grace. Christ's blood is truly the source of the life of his Mystical Body. Thus all those who are baptised become brothers and sisters in Christ.

14. In our African traditions, we have the belief that the spirit of the common ancestors of the clan still continues to govern the fortunes of the clan. Christ thus can be said to be the divine "ancestor" who continues to govern his Mystical Body.

15. The Church as God's Family is about a relationship with Jesus. We are called to be his disciples, his witnesses. We are inspired by the Trinitarian God where the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are in an equal relationship.

The values of this relationship are unity, communion in diversity, selflessness, love and equal dignity. Thus the Church as Family means that it is a home for everybody, a place for belonging, of sharing, equality and concern.

16. In 1997 we Catholics in Zambia are focussing on Church as "Caring Family". This is a call for the Church to live the apostolic mission of the compassionate Christ. Jesus showed by example that his mission was one of service, caring for those who are disadvantaged in society, of championing the cause of the oppressed, as we read in the Bible:

"He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written 'the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed.'" [Luke 4: 17 - 18]

17. The Church is a community where the weak and poor members are cherished and cared for, where women, youth and children have their rightful place. The Church as "Caring Family" is a sign of hope for all the suffering. It calls for the involvement of all of us in every aspect of human life.

18. In the midst of so many problems such as increasing poverty, death, diseases and orphans, and in the face of so many injustices such as property grabbing, oppression of women and girls, and violence and abuse in families, the Church in Zambia must be a sign of hope by courageously speaking out and actively promoting justice and development at every level of community life.

Small Christian Communities

19. If relationships are at the heart of Church as Family, then the Christian life is experienced most strongly in

Small Christian Communities (SCCs). Here the members know one another, relate in friendship, support and care for one another and grow in love.

20. For the Church as Family to exist, we need Christian families that are authentic domestic Churches and we need truly dynamic SCCs. The call to be the Family of God is experience in living Christian communities that follow the model of the early communities. The Bible tells us:

"And all who shared the faith owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and distributed the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. Each day, with one heart, they regularly went to the temple but met in their house for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved." [Acts 2:43-47]

21. SCCs are thus the primary place for all Catholics to live the life of compassion, service and concern for their neighbour as did the early Christians Community. They are places for self-evangelisation. They are places where Catholics pray together and listen to the Word of God, take on responsibilities, reflect on different human problems in the light of the Gospel, and work to find solutions to these problems.

22. These SCCs are the cornerstone of the Church, places where integration of faith and life becomes a reality, where Christians are "committed to living Christ's love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups."

23. We believe that as the SCCs grow into families where everybody feels at home and realises themselves to

be children of God, then the Church will truly be a "Caring Family". The Church will be the instrument in God's hand to help us all face the serious problems in Zambia today. Thus we will build up persons who are fully alive.

Practical Recommendations

24. Our brothers and sisters, the Church in Zambia today is all of us together. Through our baptism, we committed ourselves to live the model of the Church that Christ left on earth. And so we must honestly and courageously ask ourselves: How do we bring the loving and compassionate care of the Church, as Christ would have done, to the many suffering and hopeless Zambians today? How do we bring the Good News that Jesus proclaimed in the synagogue at Nazareth?

25. As real ambassadors of Christ, we should be sources of hope and courage to the people around us. With a spirit of true compassion, we should say to those who are suffering "Don't cry" just as our Lord said to the widow of Nain. But compassion is not blind to the fact that social injustice is the root cause of many problems we face in Zambian society today. When we don't treat each other with the dignity that God wants for every person, the result is social injustice. True compassion therefore is a strong and clear call to work for justice, peace, development and the integrity of creation.

26. The Church treasures the work of those involved in the many various ministries of compassion. We Catholic Bishops of Zambia, the Church's servants, offer them solidarity and prayers to succeed in their Christ like ministries. We also appeal to all Christians to recognise that, along with the pastoral and development work in the

Church, we need to continue advancing for a fairer and more just society and to courageously speak out against all practices and vices which breed serious social problems.

27. The African Synod urged all Catholics to be "salt of the earth" wherever they are:

"In the pluralistic society of our day, it is especially due to the commitment of Catholics in public life that the Church can exercise a positive influence. Whether they be professionals or teachers, businessmen or civil servants, law enforcement agents or politicians, Catholics are expected to bear witness to goodness, truth, justice and love of God in their life. The task of the faithful lay person.... is to be the salt of the earth and light of the world, especially in those places where only a lay person is able to render the Church present."

28. The passage from the African Synod challenges us to be true witnesses of the Church in our life. We are the ambassadors of the Church and people can only experience the care of the Church through us.

29. In order to promote the Church as a "Caring Family," we make the following recommendations:

a. Small Christian Communities

i) We support on-going formation of members of SCCs so that they become more effective in meeting today's challenges. The SCCs should critically evaluate their leadership styles in order to facilitate participation, responsibility and accountability. They should look at problems in the light of the Church's social teachings and strive to respond in ways that build increased solidarity and effective action.

ii) We recognise and commend the laudable efforts being done by those involved in "Home Based Care" pro-

grammes. We urge others to follow this example in the face of the HIV/AIDS challenge. Moreover, Christians in our SCCs should accept the physically and mentally handicapped people as full members of our communities; these should be cared for by creating an environment, which is conducive to their development.

iii) We encourage the development of lay ministries that can serve the real needs of the local communities. Therefore we are grateful to many men and women who dedicated their time and energies to promote the charitable, pastoral, development and justice responses to the problems of our society. They truly help to build up persons who are fully alive.

b. Health Care

We urge the personnel in the our Church-run medical institutions to be in the forefront in promoting access to basic medical care, something which is now beyond the reach of so many of our people. They should treat patients with the respectful compassion of Jesus Christ. We should also, as families and individuals, play our part too in the area of primary health care. We must make hygiene a priority in our homes and surroundings so that we don't expose ourselves to sicknesses and epidemics that can be avoided.

c. Family Values

i) We recognise the serious problems that many of our families face today. We know that decisions that lead people to act against life sometimes arise from difficult or even tragic situations of profound suffering, loneliness, a total lack of economic prospects, depression and anxiety about the future. These are circumstances that can lessen

the subjective responsibility of those who are involved. Nevertheless, we strongly reject abortion as a means of limiting the number of children because abortion is the killing of the unborn child. We believe that from the moment of conception, the life of every human being is to be respected and cared for.

ii) We do not share the view that the use of contraceptives will solve the problem of the spread of HIV/AIDS in our Country nor limit widespread teenage pregnancies. Neither will it solve the problem many families are facing today. This is because the use of artificial contraceptives is a reflection of what can be called "the contraceptive mentality." This encourages the understanding of the sexual act outside of the context of the human and Christian love of marriage. Artificial contraception can also encourage an anti-life attitude. Marital love should always remain open to the transmission of human life as a gift from God. It is sad that in many cases when contraception fails abortion is taken as the last resort.

iii) We call upon all Christians to adhere to Christian values of stability and faithfulness in marriage, and respect for life of the unborn child. We recommend that sexual education be given to our youth in schools. SCCs should promote Christian values and help young people to say no to premarital sexual intercourse. In this way, not only will future family stability be enhanced, but the dangers of HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancies will be minimised.

iv) The Church encourages and promotes methods of natural family planning. Such methods do not involve the use of any artificial means with respect to birth control. These methods promote communications between the couple and foster a spirit of understanding and care. Furthermore, they help in the formation of the couple in

chastity. Parishes and Small Christian Communities are encouraged to promote these methods and to inform the people about them.

v) We recommend the good work of family movements within the Church and wider society, such as Marriage Encounter and the Family Life Movement. Every parish should promote special ministries to families, taking particular care of single-parent families.

d. Women and Girls

i) We recognise that the situation of women and girls will always remain a sad one unless radical and deliberate measures are taken to improve the situation. The high rate of school dropouts, for instance, affects girls and subsequently women even more. We call for the true empowering of women to enable them to participate in decision making processes in our Church and in wider society. We encourage the responsible programmes supported by the international community, our Government and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to promote the dignity, equality and development of women.

e. The Aged

We advocate schemes that will help care for our aged. Notwithstanding the hard economic situations, we call on our extended families to still have a place for the aged, to care for them and make them feel wanted.

f. The Youth

We in the Church should strengthen our many youth programmes, ranging from pastoral formation to skills training. Each of our parishes is urged to have some clear and tangible programme for its youth. Additionally,

we should advocate an environment conducive for the full development of the youth into responsible adults. Poverty faced by many of our people, and the break down of the family, are some of the root causes of the youth problem, putting so many of our Zambian children on the streets. More resources by Government, the Church and the families need to be invested in the youth.

g. Pastoral Agents

i) We encourage all pastoral agents to integrate the work of justice and peace and development in their pastoral programmes. Justice and peace are two great gifts of the Kingdom of God bestowed on us by our Saviour. Given the grave cultural, social - economic and political problems Zambia is facing today, it becomes imperative to double efforts to promote these two Kingdom values during this year dedicated to the Church as a "Caring Family".

ii) The National and diocesan Commissions for Justice and Peace and for Development should devote themselves to programmes that will promote family life for this year and the years to come. We repeat once again our request that every parish should have a Justice and Peace Committee. These will especially help to promote the "Caring Family" by working in areas of property grabbing, the plight of widows and orphans, child abuse, child headed households, wages and living conditions, AIDS etc.

Final Appeal

30 As we conclude our pastoral letter on the Church as Caring Family, we return to the model of our Church, Jesus Christ. Again and again in the Gospels, we see Christ moved by compassion in the face of people around him who were sick. "...he saw a great crowd; and he had

compassion for them and cured their sick" [Matthew 14:14]. He fed the hungry "I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat." [Mark 8:2]. "Jesus wept" [John 11:35] in the face of those who were sad, blind and confused. He never ignored the needs of others, never gave up in the midst of so many problems.

31. We Catholics have a special responsibility to play a creative and important role in ensuring the well being of our families, communities and the wider society. We certainly cannot leave everything to the Government or to the Church. What the Government should do in promoting common good does not substitute for our own individual and community duties to contributing to the same common good. We are all challenged to contribute to the building of a just, peaceful and loving Zambia today.

32. Our brothers and sisters, we close by strongly appealing to you to follow this example of Jesus the compassionate one. Let us pray for each other, asking God's help that our Church may truly be a caring, compassionate family. Thus together we can work to improve the lives of all Zambians.

May God bless you all!

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia

21st March 1997

Rt. Rev. T-G. Mpundu

(Chairman - ZEC)

Bishop of Mbala

Most Rev. James Spaita

Archbishop of Kasama

Most Rev. Medardo Mazombwe

Archbishop of Lusaka

Most Rev. Adam Kozlowiecki, SJ

Retired Archbishop

Lusaka.

Most Rev. Adrian Mung'andu

Retired Archbishop Lusaka

Rt. Rev. Dennis de Jong

Bishop of Ndola

Rt. Rev Raymond Mpezele

Bishop of Livingstone

Rt. Rev Paul Lungu, SJ

Bishop of Monze

Rt. Rev Aaron Chisha

Bishop of Mansa

Rt. Rev. Noel O'Regan, SMA

Bishop of Solwezi

**PRESS STATEMENT
FROM CHURCH LEADERS ON
VIOLENCE AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE
1st August 1997**

Each year, on the 1st of January, the Pope issues a message to mark the World Day of Peace. Peace is one of the fundamental values that the Church promotes. It is a value that is biblically inspired. In the New Testament, Jesus calls the peacemakers, not only "blessed", but also that they shall be called God's children. (Matthew 5:9) In this light, it is clear that the Churches cannot condone violence of any kind. The Churches believe firmly that violence begets violence and does not resolve any issues. This press statement is a clear testimony of the Churches opposition to violence.

Violence And Civil Disobedience

1. We deeply condemn the violence which was displayed in the capital city on Wednesday 30th July, 1997 which resulted in the arrest and physical injuries of some people and now it is spreading to other parts of the Country. We condemn it in what ever from and whoever was involved because we believe it is destructive to this poor Nation.
2. We call upon all peace loving citizens to ignore and reject any political leaders or any kind of leaders who advocate any form of violence.
3. We condemn this violence in the strongest terms and we regret that it can happen in such a Country which is striving to develop itself. We call upon our Police Service to exercise their professionalism and caution in dealing with such situations, as we believe that their duty is to protect life and property and they should desist from unnecessary provocation, which may perpetuate further misunderstanding and violence.

Attack On The Judiciary

4. We as a Church observed with sadness the recent attacks on the Judiciary by some Political leaders and some individuals in our Society. We strongly deplore such a situation and we call upon all peace-loving citizens to respect the judiciary since this is the last dispenser of Justice in the Nation.

5. We call upon all our citizens to respect the judgement passed by the judges whom we regard as highly professional, people of integrity and high calibre which has warranted them to be where they are IN ANY CASE ONLY GOD KNOWS THE REAL TRUTH.

Inter Party Dialogue

6. We continue to encourage efforts leading to meaningful and constructive dialogue among the political parties in this Country.

Press Reports

7. We believe the press can be an instrument of peace making and Nation building especially in the manner in which they report sensitive issues and happenings in this Nation. We call upon them to be objective and to uphold high sense of morality in their profession.

8. As Church leaders we call upon all our Christians to join in praying for Peace and stability to prevail in our Nation.

Friday 1st August 1997

Rev. V. Sampa-Bredt
General Secretary
CCZ

Rev. T.K. Lumba
Executive Director
EFZ

Fr. I. Mwebe
Secretary General
ZEC

CHOOSE LIFE

The Sacred Value of Human Life and the Evil of Promoting Abortion 30th November 1997

This is one of the most comprehensive Pastoral Letters that the Catholic Bishops of Zambia have written on the sanctity of human life. They state clearly the basis of the Catholic Church's stance regarding, not only abortion, but also contraception, and the use of condoms.

The Bishops re-assert the Church's teaching by expressing compassion to those who commit these acts. They say it is not up to them to judge. They understand the 'perplexing circumstances' that often drive young people to seek an abortion. Their stance however is that in spite of these social difficulties, abortion is not the answer. Rather, our society should tackle the root causes of these social problems. They call upon all people of good will to 'choose life' over the 'culture of death'.

To all Catholic Christians and to all people of good will in Zambia: we greet you warmly as we begin the joyful season of Advent and prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Saviour at Christmas.

Introduction

1. We, the Bishops of Zambia, as pastoral leaders and concerned citizens, wish to affirm in the strongest possible terms the unique value of every human life. As Africans, we celebrate new life. In the words of Pope John Paul II, "In African culture and tradition, the role of the family is everywhere held to be fundamental. Open to this sense of the family, of love and respect for life, the African loves children who are joyfully welcomed as gifts of God. The peoples of Africa respect the life, which is conceived and born.

They rejoice in this life. They reject the idea that it can be destroyed, even when the so-called "progressive civilisations" would like to lead them in this direction.

2. It is precisely for this reason that we condemn the killing of innocent human life through abortion. This is certainly a relatively new phenomenon in our African society in which human life in the womb has always been welcomed with such joy. Consequently, our primary purpose in writing this letter at this particular time is to express to all Zambian citizens our grave concern over the practice of abortion in our Country and to focus very specifically on the evil of abortion. This concern is all the more alarming in view of an on-going advocacy for 'safe' abortion. Indeed, the acceptance of abortion sets in motion an anti-life mentality that can easily lead on the one hand to infanticide with respect to deformed or handicapped infants, and on the other hand to euthanasia with respect to the elderly and the infirm.

3. Human life is a precious gift from God, the source of all life. In the Book of Genesis, we read about creation: "God saw all God had made and indeed it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). The last and the highest form of life that God created was human life. "Let us make human beings in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves" (Genesis 1:26). The Psalmist is even more explicit with reference to unborn life: "It was you [God] who created my inmost self, and put me together in my mother's womb." (Psalm 139: 13). Consequently, every human life is sacred and demands the greatest respect and protection at every stage of development. Among the commandments given to Moses was: "You shall not kill" (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17). This is a commandment, which has been fully endorsed by Jesus himself (Mark 10:19; Matthew 19:18;

Luke 18:20). And we are mindful of the covenant that God made with us:

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live in the love of Yahweh your God, obeying God's voice, clinging to God. (Deuteronomy 30:19)

4. Choose life and not death! God calls us to protect and preserve human life both before and after birth. Indeed, we rejoice to find that this Christian teaching is also built into the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Zambia is a signatory and which clearly states: "The laws of the State must protect children before and after they are born." God has entrusted human beings with the marvellous procreative capacity to bring new human life into existence and we are held responsible to God for the manner in which we exercise this power.

The Beginning of Human Life

5. It is the teaching of the Catholic Church that human life begins from the moment of conception. "From the time that the ovum is fertilised, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor of the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with its own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already." And again, we read: "Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception."

6. Unborn human life (whether identified as an embryo or a foetus at different stages of development) is frequently referred to in terms which suggest that we are only dealing with "a lump of tissue", "a cluster of cells", "uterine contents" or "products of conception" rather than a human life. Inhumane and cruel practices are far easier

to carry out if the victim is dehumanised and depersonalised through the misuse of such language.

7. The Termination of Pregnancy Act in Zambia was introduced in 1972. By legalising abortion, Zambian society was in effect saying that it is an acceptable solution to an "unwanted" pregnancy. It can therefore seem that abortion is the responsible and necessary procedure to follow and that it is morally permissible. Even more than that, not having an abortion in difficult circumstances is often presented as the immoral option. This is not the case. We wish to state very clearly that induced and directly intended abortion is morally evil and contrary to Christian teaching.

Compassion and Concern

8. The Lord Jesus spent his public life going about doing good, healing, forgiving, comforting and showing compassion and concern for all forms of human suffering. He did not come to condemn people. At the same time, he openly confronted the evils that oppress people. Following the example of our Lord, we wish to express our compassion and concern for those numerous women and girls who find themselves facing difficult choices regarding their pregnancies.

9. We do not judge those who feel driven to destroy their own babies under pressure from various sources. We understand the perplexing circumstances in which teenagers in particular may find themselves. They need help, support and understanding. As we said in another pastoral letter: "We know that decisions that lead people to act against life sometimes arise from difficult or even tragic situations of profound suffering, loneliness, a total lack of economic prospects, depression and anxiety about

the future." At the same time, we wish to state clearly and unambiguously that we do not in any way condone acts of sexual permissiveness in teenagers nor do we condone the acts of abortion, which so frequently result from such activities.

Abortion

10. Abortion is medically defined as the termination of a pregnancy, either spontaneously (miscarriage) or by intervention (induced) before the foetus is capable of surviving outside the womb. Morally, abortion is the direct and deliberate killing of unborn human life.

11. The evil and the horror of abortion become all the more apparent when a surgical abortion is performed at later stages of the development of the conceptus (the human life that has been conceived). It is not our intention here to enter into a description of the more gruesome details of what takes place in the process of a clinical abortion. Indeed, doctors themselves tend to be reluctant to disclose to patients the precise details of the procedures to be followed. One method of surgical invasion is "dilation and curettage" (D & C) in which the cervix is dilated and the uterus scraped so that the conceptus can be removed. Another similar method is "suction and curettage" (S & C) in which a suction apparatus is used to remove the conceptus. The head of the conceptus may have to be crushed if it is too large to be sucked out of the uterus. The most extreme form of abortion is a late-term abortion called "partial-birth abortion" which takes place during delivery and during which the brain of the conceptus is sucked out and the head is crushed. We note that failure to give adequate information to women about the nature of the conceptus and of the surgical procedures to be followed

when they request an abortion is a serious infringement of their rights.

Contraceptives versus Abortifacients

12. Information on abortion is frequently concealed from women by the misuse of the term "contraceptive". A contraceptive means some mechanism (such as a male or female condom) or some substance (such as a drug, a spermicide or an ovulation suppressor) which may be used to prevent conception from taking place. Hence, it acts "contra" (against) conception. Such a procedure acts before conception and may prevent a male sperm and a female ovum from uniting so that conception does not take place after sexual intercourse.

13. On the other hand, there are other mechanical devices and substances which act after conception has taken place and either destroy the conceptus or prevent it from being implanted in the womb thereby resulting in the death of the conceptus. Such methods include the morning after pill and RU486, which are abortifacients. "Safe Plan", injectables, implants and IUDs (intra uterine devices) may also be abortifacients because, in the event of conception having taken place, they may prevent the conceptus from being implanted in the womb and prevent the survival of the conceptus.

14. Contraceptives in the "strict" sense which act before conception has taken place must be understood in a different category from abortion-inducing methods which act after conception has taken place. We have in an earlier pastoral letter referred to the danger of the "contraceptive mentality", which "encourages the understanding of the sexual act outside of the context of the human and Christian love of marriage and which so easily leads to the abortion mentality."

Abortion itself, however, is an evil on a completely different level from that of "strict" contraception. Whether it be surgical abortion as referred to in section 11 above, or the use of abortifacients as described in section 13 above, the fact is that surgical abortion and abortifacients destroy human life after it has been conceived whereas strict contraception prevents life from being conceived.

"Unwanted" Pregnancies

15. It is a well-known fact that the problem of so-called "unwanted" pregnancies is widespread throughout Zambia today. We draw attention, however, to the fact that the misuse of the word "unwanted" is very misleading. An "unplanned" or "unintended" pregnancy is not necessarily an "unwanted" pregnancy. Given the proper kind of positive counselling, many women can be encouraged to "want" to keep their babies.

Causes Leading to Abortion

16. There are many causes for the sad development of "unwanted" pregnancies in our Country. Among these causes can be mentioned poverty, lack of proper sexual education and appropriate counselling, greater permissiveness among the young, the failure of a chosen method of contraception, the breakdown of traditional family values, the weakening of religious and moral values, and lack of respect for women.

17. We are well aware of the manner in which so many young girls find themselves becoming pregnant in circumstances over which they often have little control and having often experienced abuse and exploitation. As a result, due to lack of understanding, fear of perceived unfair consequences from their parents, teachers, Churches or peers,

and due to lack of proper counselling and support to bring their babies to term, they resort to abortion. In many cases, they use unhygienic methods of abortion either by themselves or through unqualified practitioners. This can result in ruining their own health as well as destroying the lives of their unborn babies. Some even resort to dumping their babies once born.

18. In speaking of the causes of social problems in Zambia, we do not accept the bold statement that poverty is caused by population growth and the low usage of contraceptives and abortifacients. We believe rather that poverty is one of the main causes that pressurises the resort to abortions. It is widely recognised that the relationship between declining fertility and economic development is one of mutual interaction. Declining fertility is also the result of economic development and not simply its cause. Money expended on population control through promoting methods of abortion would be far more beneficial to the people of Zambia if directed towards eradicating poverty, increasing educational opportunities for girls, and the girl child in particular, and through investing in health centres for the promotion of the health of pregnant women.

The Rights of Women

19. In case we might be misunderstood, we wish to state that we wholeheartedly endorse any programme which aims at recognising the full rights of women. We take seriously the Scriptural teaching that all persons, male and female, are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26). Moreover, Pope John Paul II is quite explicit on the essential equality of women with men: "In creating the human race "male and female", God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity, endowing them with

inalienable rights and responsibilities proper to the human person." He goes on to say that the [African] Synod "deplored those African customs and practices which deprive women of their rights and the respect due to them and asked the Church on the Continent to make every effort to foster the safeguarding of these rights."

20. We further consider that the life and health of women are of central importance to the future development of our Nation. Indeed, we firmly believe that it is largely due to the fact that women are being denied their basic human rights that the problem of abortions has increased.

21. Due to numerous factors which highlight the oppressed situation of women in our society, our women and young girls find themselves in situations where abortion seems to be the only option they have. In so many cases, the men (such as "sugar daddies") who are equally responsible with women for bringing about a pregnancy either shun their responsibility or pressurise the woman to destroy the human life she has conceived. In other words, women do not often feel they have a real choice in the case of an "unwanted" pregnancy.

22. Unless we change the conditions of poverty, exploitation and lack of educational and medical benefits for women, we will not succeed in removing the causes which result in the need for abortions. We place strong emphasis on the promotion of the rights of women which we have written about as follows in an earlier pastoral letter: "The oppression of women in the family, the injustices done to widows, the high incidence of female illiteracy, the exploitation of women for sexual favours, the violence done to women: all these are signs of denial of basic human rights, an injustice which cries out to our Creator. We urge the Government to take stronger

action to promote the rightful development of women in Zambia. One effective strategy toward achieving that goal would be to promote equal opportunity for women to be represented at decision-making levels. We also pledge Church action to educate our members to a more correct view of women and to actively redress the injustices done to women in Church, State and family life."

The Rights of the Unborn

23. The primary right of the unborn, and that which underlies every other right, is the right to life. This is a right, which belongs to every human being precisely because they are human. It is a right, which it is all the more necessary to protect fully and effectively in the case of innocent and defenceless unborn life.

24. The right of the unborn child to life is frequently dismissed or overridden by reference to the right of the mother to life and health. However, the vast majority of cases in which abortions are carried out do not, in fact, fit into this category. The direct and deliberate killing of unborn human life cannot be justified. A doctor must always strive to save the lives of both the unborn child and the mother.

25. A woman indeed has a right to the control of her fertility but this is a right that needs to be exercised before she has conceived a new life. A baby is not the property of its mother despite its dependence on its mother for survival. There was a time indeed when women were considered to be the property of their husbands. How clearly we can see this injustice now! We must move against any programme, whether it be slavery, family relationships or abortion, that would reduce human beings to the status of "private property".

Family Planning in Reproductive Health

26. The Ministry of Health of the Government of Zambia has recently circulated a document entitled "Family Planning in Reproductive Health". The document is an attempt to respond to the problems of high maternal and child mortality rates and the rate of population growth in Zambia. Genuine concern is expressed for the health and well-being of women and the Ministry of Health expresses its desire "to confirm and to consolidate those responsible family values that are deeply embedded in Zambian traditional culture". We wish to endorse this aspiration and to encourage its extension to the protection of the unborn child.

27. The document further emphasises that "family life education in the schools needs to place the biological aspects of the sexual reproductive system within the wider framework of human sexuality, human relationships, responsible parenthood and individual human rights and their corresponding social responsibilities." We approve of this framework.

28. The Church places great importance on responsible family planning. One meaning of the term "responsible" is, of course, in the use of methods, which do not endanger the existence of unborn human life. Hence, we approve of natural family planning methods including lactational amenorrhoea (breast feeding), which are both medically and morally acceptable. These methods are indeed "natural"; they are scientifically grounded and they have no adverse side effects.

29. On the other hand, in accordance with Church teaching, we do not approve of the use of barrier methods (male and female condoms, diaphragms, and spermicides) which are "artificial" methods of birth control. We

do note, however, that these methods are "strict" contraceptives. As noted above in section 12, they act therefore before conception occurs and hence do not have the effect of preventing the survival of human life.

30. On the other hand, other methods of family planning mentioned in the Ministry of Health document (low-dose combined oral contraceptives, progestogen-only contraceptives, copper-bearing intrauterine contraceptive devices, and emergency contraception) can indeed act as abortifacients and are therefore not acceptable. It should be clear that the term "contraceptive" is being used in the document in a sense, which includes abortifacient action as well (see section 13 above). For this reason, it is very important that health providers should, while counselling their clients in a friendly and non-condemnatory manner, provide them with full information on the manner in which these methods work and provide them with alternatives to methods, which have possible abortifacient effects.

Abortion is NOT the Solution

31. The Ministry of Health in Zambia is assisted by a variety of organisations from abroad which strive to help solve some of the health problems experienced by our people. While we often appreciate their good will in wanting to improve women's reproductive health and to take measures to deal with the rapid rate of population growth, nevertheless we must make it quite clear that we totally reject their promotion of information about, and access to methods of abortion as a means to solving these problems. Any solution that includes the killing of innocent and unprotected human life is contrary to Christian teaching, to the African emphasis on the value of human life, and to the Statement of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as

referred to in section 4 above. Such approaches treat the symptoms of the problem without tackling their root causes.

32. Despite the goodwill of such bodies, they are promoting what Pope John Paul II has referred to as a "culture of death". Our disagreement with some aspects of the programme of action undertaken by the organisations mentioned above is not that they promote women's reproductive health but rather that they seek to do so at the expense of the rights of the unborn to life. Any such programme of action must simultaneously promote both the reproductive health of women and the right to life of the unborn. In other words, the rights of women and the rights of unborn children must be defended together.

Church's Response to Abortion

33. Our condemnation of abortion as Church leaders is quite clear. However, condemnation is not enough. To really "choose life", we must resolutely take positive steps. Therefore, we now need to clarify a programme for action that promotes a more sound moral climate in our society, works for greater social justice, and acts on behalf of those who find themselves pressurised to have an abortion. We have already committed ourselves to some elements of such a programme where we pledged ourselves to "even stronger support for families, beginning with local parish programmes such as marriage preparation and enrichment courses, marriage encounter, family life education, etc." We now wish to focus more specifically on the following points:

34. Termination of Pregnancy Act: In our Churches and elsewhere, we will strive for the restriction of the Termination of Pregnancy Act by working to remove the conditions and pressures that brought this inhumane and immoral Act into existence in our Country (see section 7

above). We even hear certain voices being raised, which would advocate for the removal of the current legal conditions under which an abortion may be performed. We will firmly resist any steps taken to remove or relax these conditions.

35. Lack of Information: We exhort our Catholic parents, priests and religious to inform themselves more fully on the extent of the problem of the termination of pregnancies in our Country. The breakdown of traditional family values and a more promiscuous and permissive attitude towards sexual encounters has resulted in the growing demand for abortions. As a result, our African respect for life has been diminished.

36. Women need information not just about foetal development and alternative services but also about the procedures and complications of abortion. So much emphasis has been put on making abortion "safe and legal" that many women do not know that it is still a serious and risky operation. This is more so here in our Country where most of these so-called "legal" abortions are performed by practitioners who are often not specialists in gynaecology. Infection and haemorrhage are common, uterine (womb) perforations do occur and can be fatal if not detected early or could lead to unnecessary hysterectomies (removal of wombs) and/or similar major operations. Other common complications include incompetent cervix (scarring of the neck of the womb), which would lead to recurrent miscarriages of later "wanted" pregnancies or premature births. The infection earlier mentioned could lead to permanent damage of the fallopian tubes, which could in turn lead to ectopic pregnancies or to total sterility due to blocked tubes. Furthermore, little attention is given to the psychological harm inflicted on the woman by having an abortion, and

the post-abortion syndrome of depression is not sufficiently acknowledged or treated.

37. Education in Human Sexuality: Education in human sexuality is the prerogative of parents who may cooperate with the school system to ensure that this is done in accordance with proper Christian values and positive traditional values. Parents may not abdicate this responsibility and Government may not provide value neutral education in this matter. So-called "value-free non-judgmental sex education" has proven to be detrimental to all involved and can lead directly to experimentation which leads to greater use of contraceptives which in turn leads to more abortions.

38. It is sadly regrettable that the sexual act between male and female has become so trivialised for many that it can seem to be like any other human act. We bemoan the fact that the shame traditionally attached to this act outside of marriage is being so rapidly eroded. It is precisely because the consequences of such an act are so uniquely special - namely, the possibility of procreating a new human life - that the sexual act has traditionally been protected by social norms and values in our society. There is no other human act that carries with it such a responsibility. And yet, it can be entered into in such a casual and frivolous manner. There is great need to alert young people to the extraordinary power for human reproduction that God has entrusted to them. Hence, young people need to be informed at an early age about the dignity of sexual relationships and taught the importance of sexual abstinence before marriage. Consequently, education in human sexuality must aim at teaching the principle: "no sex before marriage and no sex outside of marriage".

39. There is need to instil in our young girls in particu-

lar a sense of their own dignity and worth, an appreciation of the value of discipline and of the virtue of chastity, and a sense of pride in their capacity for motherhood. It is unfortunate that parents are frequently unwilling to give adequate sexual education to their children with the result that young people pick up this information from their peers outside of the framework of moral and religious values.

40. Furthermore, young girls very often tend to conceal a pregnancy from their parents out of fear of the consequences. As a result of this, they either attempt an abortion by themselves, through a traditional practitioner or through a health centre. Parents and the wider society (e.g. schools) must take a more compassionate stance towards pregnant girls while in no way condoning promiscuity. This stance must be fair and life-enhancing.

41. Young boys also need to develop a sense of respect and responsibility for their capacity to generate new life. Boys frequently perceive girls as mere objects for pleasure and abuse the meaning of "love" in order to obtain the satisfaction of their desires. Due to lack of appropriate sexual education, they can consider the act of conception as mainly the outcome of the girl's activity for which she alone is responsible. Instead of feeling a sense of co-responsibility for the protection and care of the conceptus, they rather blame the girl afterwards for being irresponsible if she does not have an abortion. This attitude is not uncommon among men also.

42. The Christian Family: The acceptance of abortion strikes at the very core of the Christian family, which is rooted in the protection and care of the unborn. In our five-year programme of spiritual renewal, and in accordance with the African Synod's declaration of the Church

as "God's Family", we have dedicated the year 1997 to the theme of "The Caring Family" and 1998 to the theme of "The African Family". We emphasise here the importance of the value of motherhood and the family which are being threatened by the promotion of abortion.

43. Pornography: We deplore the manner in which the moral standards of our youth in particular are being adversely affected by the portrayal through the visual media of declining moral standards in other parts of the world. We also note that the portrayal of violence and of the domination over women by men in books and on the screen cannot be dissociated from an increase in the sexual exploitation of women. We therefore call upon Government to exercise greater control over the availability of pornographic material in the Country.

44. The Crisis of AIDS: In view of the devastating effect which HIV/AIDS is having upon the men and women of our Country, any programme on sexual education must include a direct focus on this tragic dimension. We have already expressed our grave concern over this issue and our compassion for those who are, and have been affected by it. We wish now to renew our commitment to the struggle against this problem. We believe that the most effective and lasting solution to the spread of HIV/AIDS is to be found in a change of moral behaviour and not in the indiscriminate distribution of condoms. The virtues of chastity and fidelity to one's life partner need to be far more highly appreciated and actively promoted.

45. Training of Health Providers: There is need for greater emphasis on the training of "health-service providers" in health centres so that they may encourage women with "unwanted" pregnancies to keep their babies. In order to do this, they need to be able to offer

realistic alternatives to abortion. Women need to be given some assurance that their future will not be totally jeopardized by carrying their pregnancies to term. We can learn from the experience of "home based care" programmes with their positive approach involving local people trained in appropriate skills and attitudes.

46. Support groups: Small Christian Communities need to establish support groups to help girls with "unwanted" pregnancies to keep their babies. There is also need to encourage the development of peer support groups among girls and boys in both parishes and schools so that they may receive the moral strength and courage to avoid sex before marriage.

47. Justice: We need to work for greater justice and equality for women in our society. It is not normal or healthy for a woman to want the death of her own child. If she does, then that can often be a clear sign that an injustice has been done against her. There should not be a conflict between women and unborn children. The rights of both (i.e. the inalienable right of the conceptus to life and the reproductive rights of women) must be asserted together.

Conclusion

48. Catholic leaders are sometimes accused of lacking understanding and compassion for those who find themselves in situations of anguish and distress such as those who might seek an abortion. But in our careful consideration here of the circumstances, which surround the termination of pregnancies in our Country, we have made it abundantly clear that we feel a sense of deep compassion for those women and young girls who are somehow driven to seek an abortion. We firmly believe that women

would not normally seek the death of their own unborn children unless they felt somehow trapped in situations, which they neither intended nor desired. Our purpose in this letter, therefore, has not been to condemn but rather to express our sensitivity and compassion for those who feel that they have no real choice but to destroy unborn human life.

49. At the same time, compassion that ignores truth and justice cannot be faithful to the teaching of Christ who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6) and who came among us so that we might "have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10). Compassion that results in the destruction and death of unborn human life is false compassion. It can only result in the long term in a culture, which has a diminished sense of the value of human life itself. Such a culture is one that manifests a disregard for life in so many different ways of violence, exploitation, prejudice, corruption, ignoring of the poor and sick, and so forth. Indeed, false compassion breeds a mentality, which already bears the seeds of a culture of death rather than a culture of life.

50. That is why we must therefore continue to bear witness to truth and to challenge injustices in our society in every form. We therefore renew our commitment, stated frequently in our teachings and witnessed to actively in our programmes, to strive to overcome the unjust and dehumanising poverty in our Country which is itself a sign of the culture of death. And we place particular emphasis here on the work for justice that rejects the exploitation of women and unborn children. We must continue to fight for the greater realisation in our society of the "kingdom of truth, of justice, of love and of peace" for which Christ has inspired us to struggle. Keeping a

clear focus on the inviolability and sacredness of human life is an absolutely essential ingredient of the realisation of the reign of God among us.

51. The acceptance of abortion can never be a true solution to any human problem. God has given us a choice between life and death. In our total and unequivocal rejection of abortion, we choose life - and we urge all Catholics and all the people of Zambia to do the same.

52. May this year's Advent season enhance your love and respect for human life as we look forward to the celebration of the Birth of Christ; and may Almighty God bless you abundantly.

Your humble servants,

The Catholic Bishops of Zambia.

Bishop T-G Mpundu	Bishop Chairman, ZEC
Bishop P. Lungu, SJ	Bishop Vice-Chairman, ZEC
Archbishop M. Mazombwe	Archbishop of LUSAKA
Archbishop J. Spaita	Archbishop of KASAMA
Archbishop A. Mung'andu	Archbishop Emeritus, LUSAKA
Archbishop A. Kozłowiecki, SJ	Archbishop Emeritus, LUSAKA
Bishop D. De Jong	Bishop of NDOLA
Bishop A. Chisha	Bishop of MANSA
Bishop N. O'Regan, SMA	Bishop of SOLWEZI
Bishop R. Mpezele	Bishop of LIVINGSTONE
Bishop P. Duffy, OMI	Bishop of MONGU

Lusaka, Zambia.

First Sunday of Advent, 30 November 1997.

JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON THE FAILED COUP

**As released by the Christian Council of Zambia,
the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and
the Zambia Episcopal Conference
on 14 January, 1998**

The political situation continued to worsen in the Country following the contentious elections in 1996. A coup attempt failed after which the Government declared a state of emergency. Using the powers of under the state of emergency a large number of people were arrested and detained.

In this context, the Church leaders appealed to the Government to ensure that the state of emergency was not used for political ends. They called for speedy trials of the accused to ensure that justice was done instead of prolonged detentions. They decried torture as a means of extracting evidence from suspects. They called for justice to be dispensed with regard to natural justice

1. We, as representatives of the Church in Zambia, met at the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ) offices in Lusaka to review the current political situation in Zambia. Our consultation comes in the wake of the failed coup attempt of October 28, 1997, and in the wake of other related political intrigues. To that end, we are grateful to God Almighty for the peace we have continued to enjoy in this Nation. Thus, grounding ourselves in the mercies of the Almighty God, we wish to make our voice heard on a number of pertinent issues in keeping with our moral obligation to the people of God who cut across all political divides. Following, then, is our joint communiqué:

The Attempted Coup

2. We reiterate our unreserved condemnation of the attempted coup. Coups solve no problem. Rather, they are a source of most of our problems in Africa; they are a recipe for anarchy. As a Church, therefore, our thanks will always go to God for saving this Nation from a possible military dictatorship. Examples of such anarchy abound throughout Africa. Coups have continued to disturb the peace, freedom and unity of the African Nation-State. This cannot be tolerated in a land, which has known peace for decades on end. God's gift of peace must be cherished at all costs.

The State of Emergency

3. We are on record as having endorsed the declaration of the state of emergency with reservations. In the same breath, we would like to caution the Government and the State functionaries not to use emergency powers to settle old scores. Such behaviour will certainly set a very bad precedent. The Church, as a moral voice in the Nation, strongly feels that this state of emergency must not be unnecessarily prolonged. With this in mind, we strongly appeal to the current session of Parliament to critically review the state of emergency. The question that must be asked is: Is the state of emergency serving the purpose for which it was declared? We believe that it behoves this current session of Parliament to uphold the democratic principles of good governance.

Detentions and Arrests

4. We note with regret that there have been prolonged detentions. The Permanent Human Rights Commission further corroborates this finding. Such prolonged de-

tentions may potentially result in uncalled-for victimization of innocent people. The very act of instituting an arrest assumes possession by the arresting officer of fairly reasonable apriori evidence. If that had been the case, then the period of investigations should have been considerably shortened. As things stand, we are very concerned that it is taking too long for the investigating authorities to bring suspects to court on formal charges. As the old adage goes: Justice delayed is justice denied!

Torture

5. Instances of torture have been reported both by the media and the Human Rights Commission. The Church strongly condemns such evil practices. We therefore appeal to the investigators in the strongest of terms to avoid torture in dealing with suspects. We believe that there are many humane and professional means of extracting information from suspects. The rule-of-thumb must be respect for suspects' basic human rights and dignity.

Legal Process

6. We are privy to the difficult and complicated situation our judges are in today. This notwithstanding, we have confidence in the judiciary of our Nation to dispense justice in accordance with their professional regard for natural justice. Our fervent prayers lie with our judges to execute their judgments expeditiously and fairly. In the same breath, we urge all other officers of the Law to do their bidding more speedily for the sake of proper justice and fair play.

Inter-Party Talks

7. We note again that the inter-party talks initiated late last year are absolutely crucial to the democratic process

of our Nation. Our earnest prayer is that the second phase of this political dialogue will take place as soon as possible. We are particularly concerned that these talks must be inclusive enough to enable all interested political players to fully participate. With this in mind, and while we recognize that the ultimate success of the talks lies with all the political parties, we would like to specially appeal to the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) to take the lead in creating a conducive atmosphere which will ensure greater inclusiveness and participation.

Conclusion

8. The issues we have raised and commented on are undeniably complex. We cannot expect them to be resolved by human action alone. We thus conclude by urging all Christians in our Churches to pray for God's continued guidance and direction as our Nation goes through this difficult period.



JUBILEE 2000

JOINT PASTORAL LETTER

The breaking of chains is the world-wide Symbol of the Jubilee 2000 Campaign 7th August 1998

Zambia's external debt grew dramatically in the 1980s, and at the time of the 1991 political transition it stood at over US\$ 7 billion, or almost US\$ 700 for every Zambian woman, man and child. Several times the Catholic bishops had mentioned in the Statements the need to have this debt substantially reduced or cancelled. With the 'Jubilee 2000' campaign inspired by calls from Pope John Paul II, Archbishop George Carey of Canterbury and other key religious leaders, the Zambian Churches joined together in a strong call for debt cancellation in order to enable Zambia to meet the great needs of the poor. The Churches pledged to monitor the use of money freed, so that these resources really contributed to meeting the social and productive needs of the Country.

JUBILEE 2000: CANCEL ZAMBIA'S DEBT!**Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:****Greetings to you, with the peace of Jesus Christ!**

1. In a year and a half, as we are entering into the Year 2000, many Christian denominations will be celebrating a 'jubilee year' in memory of the birth of Our Lord and Saviour.

2. From the teaching of the Old Testament, we learn that a jubilee year was a special time for restoring the broken bonds of the community of God's people, as recorded in Deuteronomy 15 and Leviticus 23. It was time for setting free slaves, redistributing land, and cancelling debt. All of this was done so that there would be greater equality among all the people, the family of God, since all the people are made in the image of God, as demonstrated in Genesis 1:27. May we now draw your attention to Zambia's external debt situation?

Zambia's External Debt

3. Of special relevance to the people of Zambia today is the call for the cancelling of debt. As we are all aware, Zambia suffers heavily under an immense burden of external debt. Over US\$7.1 billion is owed to donor countries and to international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF. That amounts to a debt of almost US\$ 750 for every woman, man and child in Zambia!

4. We owe such a huge amount of money as debt for a variety of reasons. Our Government borrowed heavily in the 1970s when copper prices went down and petrol prices went up. Our economy was hit hard by these external factors. There were also internal factors influencing

the accumulation of debt, such as mistakes and mismanagement. And interest had to be paid back on the loans that we received.

5. In a word: simply trying to pay the interest and retire some of the capital each year has become a tremendous burden for Zambia. For example, in this year's Government budget, more money is spent on debt servicing than on all education and health expenditures combined. In a Country where 70% of the population lives below the poverty line, the fact that money is spent on debt service instead of meeting the needs of the people has tragic consequences. But what about efforts at debt relief?

Debt Relief

6. We leaders of the Christian community in Zambia welcome the efforts of our Government, many NGOs and Church groups in this Country and elsewhere, and concerned people around the world, to work for the reduction of our external debt. This reduction can come about through two initiatives currently in progress.

7. The first is the programme organised by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reduce debts of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) through negotiated agreements that are related to our maintaining the direction of economic reforms under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). This HIPC initiative would in the future bring down a portion of Zambia's debts.

8. The second programme is the more dramatic call for cancellation of Zambia's debt through the global campaign called 'Jubilee 2000'. This Jubilee initiative, organised around the world, calls upon the leaders of the richest Nations and the lending institutions to cancel the

unpayable debts of poor countries, so that we can break the chains of debt and have a fresh start, a new beginning, to celebrate the new millennium.

9. Zambia's total debt is clearly unpayable. Zambia cannot pay back because the debt burden is economically exhausting. It blocks future development. Zambia will not pay back because the debt burden is politically destabilising. It threatens social harmony. Zambia should not pay back because the debt burden is ethically unacceptable. It hurts the poorest in our midst. Has there been any Christian response?

Christian Action

10. For these reasons, then, we write this joint letter addressed to the members of our various Christian congregations in Zambia, and indeed to all Zambians of good will, to encourage positive and effective action to reduce our external debt. To this end, we:

i) Call upon the Government to inform the citizenry about the actual debt situation of the Country and about debt relief negotiations that are underway. This is necessary so that there can be an informed public debate leading to wide democratic decisions.

ii) Call upon the members of the Churches of our three bodies (CCZ, EFZ, ZEC) to join the Jubilee 2000 campaign by signing the petition calling for cancellation of Zambia's debts. We are aiming to collect two hundred thousand (200,000) names over the next several months.

iii) Call upon our friends in the international community (sister and brother Churches, congregations, and all concerned persons) to lobby for equitable and effective debt relief. We are already deeply grateful for the support received so far in this effort.

11. But we do wish to make three very important points regarding this campaign for debt relief for Zambia.

12. First, we are not asking for debt 'forgiveness'. To receive 'forgiveness' is to acknowledge guilt. But Zambia has been, with considerable diligence and sacrifice, meeting its debt service. Our incurring of debt has not primarily been our fault, and hence 'forgiveness' is not the proper word to use. Rather we ask for 'cancellation' of an unpayable burden that is harming our people very much. It is not charity that we are seeking, but justice!

13. Second, we recognise that Zambia must be responsible in the use of any monies made available through debt relief. For this reason we will hold the Government accountable, and cooperate with Government officials and civil society organisations to monitor the use of the money freed up if any when debt is cancelled. We want to ensure that the newly available resources really do contribute to meeting the social and productive needs of the Country.

14. Third, we know that if Zambia is to move forward, honest and hard work is demanded of all of us. The experience of 'jubilee' in the cancelling of debt can be for us a new start, a fresh beginning, only if we commit ourselves to the culture of responsibility and accountability, and involve ourselves with dedication and sacrifice in working for the future of our children. It is here that the Churches must give the best example, so that not simply in words but in deeds we will have a true 'jubilee'!

Conclusion

15. In conclusion, then, we ask you, our brother and sister Christians, to join the 'Jubilee 2000' campaign in very practical and effective ways over the next few months. To this end, we urge you to:

i) Get more information and understanding about Zambia's debt. Our Church bodies can help you with materials.

ii) Discuss with local MPs and other Government officials the debt situation. Get them to take an active role in the campaign for equitable debt relief for Zambia.

iii) Discuss and sign the 'Jubilee 2000' petition. Help us to get two hundred thousand (200,000) signatures by the start of 1999. To that end, the ad hoc Ecumenical Steering Committee for Jubilee 2000-Zambia, which has been constituted by our three bodies, will be circulating petitions for your signatures.

16. God blessed the people of the Old Testament who worked for the peace and justice of the jubilee and who committed themselves to building the community that is the family of God. This same God, revealed to us in Jesus, will bless our efforts here in Zambia, and the efforts of friends around the world, to promote that peace and justice and community that are the signs of the coming of God's Kingdom on earth that we pray for each day, as Matthew 6:10 testifies.

Let us pray for each other in this noble task!

Signed:

Rev. Violet Sampa-Bredt,	General Secretary, Christian Council of Zambia
Rev. Thomas Lumba,	Executive Director, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia.
Fr. Ignatius Mwebe,	Secretary General, Zambia Episcopal Conference

7th August 1998

Cathedral of the Holy Cross

THE MISSIONARY FAMILY

**A Pastoral Letter to all Catholics
from the Bishops of Zambia on the 1999
Theme for the Implementation of the African Synod
25th March 1999**

Keeping the main of theme of Church-as-the-family-of-God the Bishops wrote this Pastoral Letter for on the 1999 sub-theme of the 'Missionary Family'.

The Missionary family is one that works together to make the name of God well known. It is a family that is sent to witness to the values of the Kingdom of God. The values of Peace and Unity.

In the context of our broken society where families are facing immense suffering, the Church as a missionary family is called upon to be responsive to the suffering of the people, and to care for those who cannot look after themselves.

Once healed, our human families can again be the privileged place of witnessing to the Gospel, after all it is the first cell of the Christian community.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1. We, your Bishops, send you greetings of peace. During this year 1999 we want to focus our prayers, intentions and commitment on the Church as a Missionary Family. To go out and spread the Good News of Jesus is the main task of the Family of God. It was also the main concern of the bishops at the African Synod : to proclaim a message that is relevant and credible for our people today, as we move towards the Year 2000.

"Father, I have made your name known..." John 17, 6

2. Pope John Paul II has dedicated the year 1999 to God the Father, inviting all of God's Family to journey together towards the Father, in the footsteps of his beloved Son. Jesus Christ was the first and the greatest evangeliser. His teaching was really good news. Many people were eager to listen to him, because he talked about God, not as a demanding chief, but as his Abba, his dear Father. "I came from the Father, and I am going to the Father", Jesus told his disciples, "and I am going to prepare a place for you, so that you may be with me" (John 14,2).

3. Jesus came to redirect us, to open up a way to the Father of all, to reveal to us who God really is. His enthusiasm, his joy and his childlike trust were so visible that he inspired hope and confidence in simple people in spite of all their misery and sufferings.

4. Jesus was sent by the Father to share God's life with us and to transform this world into something better. He often expressed his vision with the words "repent, the Kingdom of God is close at hand."

5. But Jesus did not only speak about the Kingdom, he showed by his actions where the Kingdom of God was already happening: "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind see again, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is proclaimed to the poor." (Luke 7:22). This is what Jesus came to bring us: God's own life. For this he lived, suffered and finally died.

"As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world".... John 17,18

6. As disciples of Jesus we too are sent to make all people share in the life of God. Once we have received God's abundant life through the sacraments of Baptism

and the Eucharist, we are sent on a mission, we are given a task. After having come "home" in the warmth of God's family, we are sent out into the world in order to announce the good news of God's love and life to all our brothers and sisters.

7. As Catholics we tend to take the gifts of the Lord and our Church membership for granted. Often our Christian communities and our associations are too inward looking, busy with themselves and their own growth. We seem to have lost the original Pentecostal fire and missionary enthusiasm.

8. This year it will be ten years since the visit to Zambia of our Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father encouraged us to be missionaries by quoting the word of Jesus to his disciples: "You shall be my witnesses". And we, your Bishops, adopted these challenging words of Jesus in the Pastoral Letter marking 100 Years of Catholic Faith in Zambia: the Gospel must above all be proclaimed by the witness of a true Christian life.

i. Can we say that we have really encountered Jesus in our lives as the 'pearl of great price', and that we are eager to share this joy with others?

ii. Are we joyful and firm witnesses of his Good News in our surroundings, places of work, families, in our public functions?

"How will they believe in one they have never heard of? And how will they hear without someone preaching". And how will they preach unless they are sent? Rom. 10,14-15

9. We are all sent to be true witnesses of the Gospel message of faith, hope and love, there where we are. As your Pastors, we would like to mention some areas needing attention during this year of the Missionary family.

Peace and Unity

10. The Kingdom of God is found when people live together as children of the same family. Peace and unity is what our Country needs most these days. However, there seems to be divisions and latent tribalism among us. It often starts in small ways there where we are, in our families, in our Christian communities and associations. If left unresolved, these divisions could lead to violence and even to war.

11. We all remember the challenging words of John Paul II during the African Synod: "Look inside yourselves. Look to the riches of your own culture and traditions. Let the Good News take root in your life" Our Country Zambia is enriched with a diversity of cultures and traditions, and we are called to respect all that is good and of value in each of these cultures. But inculturation is never an imposition of one way of living; it is a long, often difficult process that involves patient dialogue and great respect for one another. As Catholics, we are members of a Church, which is universal, open to all cultures and traditions, eager to build together the universal Family of God.

12. Jesus came to reveal to us a God Creator and Parent of all. All human beings are created in God's divine image, all equal in dignity, all equally loved. "God does not discriminate and has no favourites" (Acts 10,34). We are all destined to be God's children, and this is what challenges us to fight all divisions according to class, race, tribe, gender or other interest groups.

Dialogue and reconciliation are the way of life of the Family of God. During this year, we invite you to take concrete steps to heal divisions and promote reconciliation in your families, your Christian communities, and your surroundings.

Our Christian Families.

13. We are aware that in our present situation of grave economic difficulties, it is not easy to go out and be true witnesses of Jesus. We are asked to bring Good News in the midst of a reality, which is often "bad news" in terms of human suffering. In such difficult times, people tend to be too preoccupied with survival to think about the plight of others. Community solidarity, generosity, concern for the poor, honesty and truth, are easily abandoned due to socio-economic hardships. As Christians we are challenged to rise above the temptations of discouragement and apathy, and continue to abide by the Gospel values of love, justice, and concern for others. We encourage you to remain a caring Family even in times of hardships.

14. Our Christian families are a privileged place of witnessing to the Gospel and the first cell of the Christian community. But because of the harsh conditions of life, most of our families experience serious difficulties. Less and less families can meet the traditional demands of the extended family. As we already mentioned in our 1994 Pastoral Letter to Families: "the bonds that bind together members of the extended family are stretched to breaking point due to poverty, sickness, death and burials, and the increase of orphans. This precious but sensitive area needs to be addressed in an ongoing way at all levels in the Church, beginning with the Small Christian Communities."

15. The evangelisation of our families needs to be seen as a priority. How relevant are our pastoral programmes to the real problems which families are facing today?

So as to promote Christian family values, and evaluate the impact of our pastoral programs on families and

family life, we again encourage the creation of a Commission on the Family at National level, with corresponding structures in our Dioceses. "Such a Commission would assist in educating families in evangelisation, in promoting the rights and welfare of families, in formulating policy, in co-ordinating the many initiatives of support groups for the family, and generally to help families to feel solidarity in their life and mission" (Pastoral Letter of 1994).

Suffering, Sickness and Death.

16. Because of growing poverty, the AIDS pandemic and other diseases, there is and will be a great deal of sickness and death among us. The Catholic Church has a long history of care and compassion, and Zambia is not an exception. We are grateful to all those of you who give of their means, their time and efforts to care for the most unfortunate of our society. We particularly commend the Home-Based Care programmes, involving members of the Small Christian communities, for their dedication to the sick and dying.

17. However, if we want to be credible witnesses in today's situations, we are challenged to become more mature in the field of suffering. We are inclined to start "pointing fingers" and blame others for our plight. Finger pointing instead of searching our own hearts leads us often to suspect others of being the cause of evil. When someone is at the point of death after a painful illness, we want to know the cause of evil, and we end up by going to a witch doctor who is quick to accuse a person we do not particularly like, or are jealous of. The result is more hatred, more suspicion, more misery, and even more death. Will the fact of us knowing where these evils come from, or who have caused them, cure us?

18. Let us be more open about the AIDS virus, instead of hiding it under the words "he/she died after a short or long illness". The cause of the disease might be a sin, but the disease itself is not a sin.

Have we changed our sexual behaviour? Often the nightmare of AIDS is brought into our houses by the irresponsible conduct of one of the parents. Behavioural change is a "must" in the field of sexuality both for young and old, for men and women. It will set us free for a fuller, more abundant life. Let us stop blaming others for all that goes wrong, and take up the path of authentic conversion: "I will get up and return to my Father...".

Transmitting our Faith.

19. According to our Zambian tradition, the extended family is responsible for the formation of its young members, and parents are the first messengers of the faith for their children. But often the younger generations have little knowledge of the faith, as many parents do not see anymore the transmission of faith as their responsibility.

20. As a caring family we are above all called to care for the faith we have received; the seed of faith that has been planted in our hearts needs to be watered, weeded, grow roots, before it can bear the fruits God expects of us. The African Synod strongly reminds us of the need to "train, motivate and empower" all the agents of evangelisation (EA 53).

It is our wish that this year a serious effort be made to better prepare all the catechisers, full-time catechists as well as voluntary catechisers, who are at the forefront in transmitting the faith to the younger generations.

The Word of God.

21. The Small Christian Communities are a privileged place of evangelisation, as they listen to God's Word and reflect on their different human problems in the light of the Gospel. We would like to see these Small Christian communities become the place where the Church is truly experienced as a Missionary Family.

22. For this to happen, the Word of God must be at the heart of our life together, for our growth in faith and for our mission. During this year let us therefore make a special effort to put back the Bible in the hands of our Catholic Christians, to make it more easily available in the families and in the Christian communities to pray and study.

We encourage all pastoral agents to propose Bible courses and seminars in the parishes, so as to make the Word of God "known, loved, pondered and preserved in the hearts of the faithful" (EA 58).

Missionary Vocations.

23. Jesus Christ told his disciples to bear witness to him "to the ends of the earth". For many years we in Zambia have been receiving missionaries to come and proclaim the Good News to us. The time has now come to become "missionaries to ourselves" and to take our part in the Church's mission to the whole world.

Let us encourage Zambian missionary vocations; young men and women ready to be sent to proclaim the Gospel to less well-off dioceses within Zambia and beyond its borders. Let us pray for holy missionaries ready to witness to Jesus Christ and bring the fire of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

We your Bishops call and empower Christian families to become missionaries - "go home to your people and tell them all that the Lord in his mercy has done for you" (Mk.5,19).

24. Finally, let us remember, "The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of the Church's mission. It is the Holy Spirit who leads the Church on her missionary paths". (R.M. 21). Often we forget the strength and importance of prayer. There are communities among us, called contemplative, who spend most of their days in prayer. They pray for all of us, so that our missionary work may be fruitful. Together with them let us pray and trust that the Spirit will be with us, empowering and inspiring us during this Year of the Missionary Family, as we journey towards the New Millennium.

Lusaka, 25th March 1999

The Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord

Bishop T-G. Mpundu	Bishop of Mpika, Chairman ZEC
Archbishop M. Mazombwe	Archbishop of Lusaka
Archbishop J. Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Cardinal A. Kozlowiecki, SJ	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Archbishop A. Mung'andu	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Bishop D. De Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop A. Chisha	Bishop of Mansa
Bishop R. Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Bishop N. O'Regan, SMA	Bishop of Solwezi
Bishop P. Duffy, OMI	Bishop of Mongu
Mgr. G. Lungu	Apostolic Administrator, Chipata

**RECONCILE AND CELEBRATE
A PASTORAL LETTER
FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ZAMBIA
FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR 2000
25th January 2000**

To mark the Great Jubilee year 2000, when Christians celebrated 2000 years since the birth of Jesus Christ and the beginning of the third millennium, the Bishops issued this pastoral letter.

This Pastoral Letter looks back to the biblical jubilee which was 'an expression of Israel's faith. God's people were convinced that God alone is the Lord of creation - a God who cares, heals and forgives'. This is why the title of this Pastoral Letter is 'Reconcile and Celebrate'. It is a special time for renewal and the rebuilding of all relationship, with God and our fellow human beings.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

At the beginning of this Great Jubilee Year 2000 we greet you all in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 'the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be forever' (Hebrew 13:8). May it be for all of you a year of abundant graces.

'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1,14).

1. Two thousand years have passed since the birth of Christ, and this is a great event for Christians all over the world. On the 24th December 1999, Christmas Eve, the Holy Father John Paul II opened the holy door and, together with the people of God, entered Saint Peter's Basilica to begin the Great jubilee of the Year 2000, the celebration of the central mystery of our Christian faith.

2. The term "jubilee" speaks of joy: the whole Church rejoices remembering the birth of Jesus. As Christian believers we are filled with joy and thanksgiving for the love shown us by the Father in giving us his Beloved Son: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believes in him should have eternal life'. (10. 3, 16).

"The Joy of every Jubilee is above all a Joy based on the forgiveness of sins, the joy of conversion and reconciliation"
(John Paul II, TMA)

With this letter, we your pastors would like to offer you some reflections to help you experience this jubilee Year as a journey of reconciliation, spiritual renewal and solidarity.

The Jubilee Year: A Favourable Time

3. Jubilee or Holy Years have always been special times the life of the Church when we are called to look back, to re-examine our lives, and to renew our faith, so that we may grow towards a deeper Christian life and a more generous service of others. This is why the Holy Father invites us to look back to some providential events of these past centuries.

4. Let us look back with gratitude at the first hundred years of evangelisation in Zambia. Let us thank God for the selfless dedication of the first missionaries who answered the call of Christ to go and share the Good News even at the peril of their lives.

Let us give thanks to God for having prepared us for their coming in such a way that many Zambians accepted the message of Jesus Christ with joy and great generosity. This is a sign that many elements of our Zambian culture prepared us for the coming of Jesus our Saviour.

5. For us in Africa the culmination of the providential events of the last century was the African Synod, which ushered in the beginning of a new stage in the evangelisation of our continent. It offers our local Churches a pastoral plan of action to enable us to carry out our evangelising mission as effectively as possible, ready to carry the fire of Jesus Christ into the Year 2000. Yes indeed, the African Synod was a favourable time for all of us.

6. An important fruit of the African Synod was the invitation to look at the Church as the Family of God. Not any longer a family within the limits of one clan, one tribe or one village, but a family that reaches out to all, includes all, and cares for all, especially the needy and the suffering.

In our Small Christian communities we have learned to reach out to everybody through the family support we give to one another. We encourage you to continue to develop and strengthen different lay ministries in your Christian communities: the ministry of the Word, the ministry of catechesis, the ministry to marriages, to the poor and sick, the ministry of healing, the ministry of justice and peace, etc. This will enable us to become more effective witnesses in our society.

7. Yes indeed, we have a lot to be grateful for. We know we are not perfect, but we go into the new century as a committed and caring family, aware that 'the voice of many is heard by God'. Thanks to God's abundant grace working in us we may say that in this respect we give a humble example of Christian discipleship to the world at large.

8. We are however aware that the implementation of the vision of the African Synod is not over with the celebration of the jubilee 2000. This is why we urge you all to take seriously the words of the Holy Father: 'For all the

peoples of Africa the best preparation for the new Millennium consists in a firm commitment to implement with great fidelity the decisions and orientations of the African Synod." (E.A. 141)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, let us make use of this favourable- time to express our gratitude for the past by continuing to witness to Jesus and his Gospel with renewed commitment and zeal.

- *What particular event in our recent Zambian history do I/we want to be thankful for, or wish especially to celebrate?*
- *Do I/we really know much about the African Synod, and what could I/we do in order to know more about it?*

The Jubilee Year... A Time Of New Beginnings

9. Long before Jesus Christ was born, the Jewish people were keeping Jubilees or Holy year. Every 50th year was known as a time dedicated in a special way to God. We read in Leviticus 25 that the Jubilee started with the sound of the horn on the Day of Expiation; it was a very solemn celebration, a day of rest, penance and fasting and an invitation to become aware of oneself as a sinner, to repent and be forgiven.

10. It was also a time of new beginnings, especially for the poor and oppressed: during that year slaves became free again, debts were forgiven, land was redistributed. Families and individuals that had lost their property and even their personal freedom were given the possibility to start a new life. The jubilee was a proclamation of hope, and a true experience of God's liberating grace.

"You will declare this year to be sacred and proclaim the liberation of all the Country's inhabitants" (Leviticus 25, 10).

11. The Jubilee legislation showed a particular concern for the extended family: "In this year of Jubilee each of you

should go back to your own family, and regain possession of your ancestral property" (see Leviticus 25, 13). The idea was, to protect families economically, securing their ownership of the piece of land assigned to them. It was a safeguard against the moral and spiritual degradation that is often the consequence of too much poverty. Indeed, what good is to preach 'family values' if family are being destroyed and human beings degraded by economic hardships?

This Biblical concern for the poor was also present in our own African traditions. In many places on the day of the new moon there was special concern shown to children, to the poor, the crippled the slaves. The community would try to repay those unjustly treated with food, gifts and clothing. It was believed that on that evening the ancestors of the households would speak through the 'unlucky' ones that felt rejected by the lucky, healthy ones.

12. Today we seem to have forgotten some of our precious traditional values. We live in a world geared above all to profit and money making in a world where greed and selfishness are becoming an accepted attitude. Therefore the jubilee values of social justice for all, of practical concern for the family, of respect for the land, and a just distribution of the gifts that God has given us, remain a big challenge to all of us.

In our Country where over 80% of the people live below the poverty line, where our health system and our educational institutions are breaking down, we are challenged to take very seriously the words of our Holy Father: *"A commitment to justice and peace in a world like ours, marked by so many conflicts and intolerable social and economic inequalities, is a necessary condition for the celebration of the jubilee"* (John Paul II, TMA 51).

In this Country which claims to be a 'Christian Nation' new beginnings would be a national budget that reflects a firm commitment by decision makers to alleviate poverty by ensuring food security, easy access to health care, and quality education for all. Only if we give back to all our brothers and sisters the dignity that is theirs by right can we make of the celebration of the Jubilee Year a time of new beginnings.

- *What is the biggest threat to peace and harmony in our families and society, and how can our Church help to overcome it?*
- *Who around me/us is particularly 'unlucky', and how can I/we reach out to them during this jubilee Year?*

The Jubilee Year: A Time To Renew Our Faith

13. The biblical jubilee was not merely an economic institution; it was above all an expression of Israel's faith. God's people were convinced that God alone is the Lord of creation - a God who cares, heals and forgives. This is why the meditative reading of the Word of God occupied a special place during this year. It was a "year of favour" which God granted his people, so that they could turn in themselves, repent and renew their faith.

14. It was in this Jubilee atmosphere that Jesus began his mission. One day he went to the synagogue of Nazareth on a Sabbath day, and looked for a text that would serve to explain what his mission would be all about. He read the passage of the prophet Isaiah 61:

"Spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the Good News to the poor... to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. 17 (See Luke 4,18-21)

Jesus sat down and declared that with his coming, this scripture text was fulfilled. God's own Son came to bring the great Jubilee of salvation for everyone. Jesus is the one sent by the Father to proclaim the Good News to the poor and to tell us that the lowly would be lifted up, and that the last will be first.

As disciples of Jesus of Nazareth we are called to do the same. We urge all Catholics, in families, in Small Christian Communities and lay movements, we call upon Catholic professionals, those in public office and decision making bodies, to dissociate themselves from the conspiracy of silence and apathy in the face of injustice, violation of human rights, and rampant corruption which have reached epidemic proportions and endanger the very fabric of our society. This Jubilee year offers a unique opportunity to say like Zacchaeus: 'if I have cheated anybody, I will pay back...' (Luke 19,8).

15. In our different dioceses and parishes a jubilee Calendar has been drawn up, committees have been formed, and various events are being prepared. Whatever we plan and - organise, let us remember that we are called to act as Jesus acted and to proclaim a Year of God's favour in words and in deeds. Let us remember that the first aim of our celebrations is to strengthen our faith so that we can go and share it with others.

The custom of pilgrimages has always been linked to Holy Years. The popular places of Catholic pilgrimages are the Holy Land, where Jesus lived, died and rose, Rome, the city of Peter and Paul, and different shrines dedicated to the Virgin Mary. But these places are far away, and not many of us can afford to travel there. This is why we have chosen local places in our different Dioceses where we encourage you to go on pilgrimage

and experience the graces of conversion and healing offered during this Great Jubilee.

16. All Baptised share the same faith in Jesus. Christ and this jubilee Year is a call to grow in mutual understanding and respect. It is therefore important to give our celebrations an ecumenical dimension, *"so that the different Christians can celebrate the Great Jubilee, if not completely united, at least much closer to overcoming historical division."* (John Paul II, TMA 34).

It is also our wish that this Great Jubilee may be an occasion to enter into an open dialogue and fruitful co-operation with representatives of other religions, uniting our efforts to build together a better and more just society.

- *What do I/we need most in order to deepen and strengthen our faith during this jubilee Year?*
- *How can we strengthen the ecumenical dimension of our jubilee celebrations?*

The Jubilee Year: A Time To Reconcile And Celebrate

17. The Jubilee Year 2000 is above all a call to conversion of heart through a change of life. It is a time for each one of us to look honestly at our own life, *"so that the 2000'h anniversary of the central mystery of our Christian faith may be experienced as a journey of reconciliation and a sign of true hope"*. (John Paul II: Journeying towards the Third Millennium)

18. Reconciliation was an important human and religious value in our African traditional societies, answering our deep desire for peace and social harmony. Peace was the fruit of honesty, truth and solidarity. Conflicts in the community were often redressed through reconciliation rituals. During these rituals feelings of anger and hatred were brought into the open,

conflict was acknowledged, and social harmony was re-established. This was often done in the form of a cleansing ceremony, a washing or a burning rite. When an agreement was reached, reconciliation was then celebrated by a shared meal.

19. As Christians we know that reconciliation is above all the work of God within us:

"It is all God's work, he reconciled us to himself through Christ.. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not holding anyone's fault against them but entrusting to us the message of reconciliation"- (II Co.5, 18-19).

It is God who forgives and saves. When we were still sinners, God reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ. But God sends us to become agents of reconciliation: reconciliation among married couples, between parents and children, between families; reconciliation between the hierarchy and the people of God, reconciliation among and between the clergy, the religious and the laity, between the leaders and those they wish to serve. .

20. For us Catholics the sacrament of reconciliation is a privileged time to reconcile with God. During this Jubilee Year we invite you to rediscover the importance and deep meaning of this sacrament of God's mercy, and the richness and variety of ways it can be celebrated.

Community rites of reconciliation are particularly important during the liturgical times of Advent and Lent. We encourage the priests to carefully prepare them, giving due importance to the Word of God and to inculturated symbolic actions, so that the faithful may truly experience the joy of being forgiven and reconciled with God. This will help to give new life and meaning to the practice of this sacrament.

21. Reconcile and celebrate.

If as a Church-as-Family we want to be agents of reconciliation in our society, let us first honestly examine ourselves, and accept what in our Christian communities needs reconciliation and forgiveness. In our family prayer, the Our Father, we hope to be forgiven in the measure that we forgive others. In spite of praying it often, we sometimes believe that certain persons cannot be forgiven especially those who have harmed us through their actions. Forgiveness is not easy, but let us pray for the strength to take some positive steps during this year.

True reconciliation is first of all to honestly accept that something was wrong and that I have hurt others'. True reconciliation is to seek and accept forgiveness: *"when you stand in prayer, forgive whatever you have against anybody, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your failings too"* (Mark 11,25).

22. Reconcile and celebrate.

In the Church-as-Family we are all inter-dependent, journeying side by side towards the new Millennium - bishops, priests, religious, lay men and women, the youth and children. Respectful of the role of each one in the family of God let us sit down together and talk about our mutual needs and concerns. Let us humbly accept our wrongdoings and ask for forgiveness for the times we may have dominated others because of our office, or failed to stand up courageously for justice in our Church.

23. Reconcile and celebrate.

At peace with one another in our Church-as-Family let us go out and be agents of reconciliation to our broken society. Let us make of this jubilee Year a reminder of the

dignity of every human person created in the image of God and of our inter-dependence in the one human family.

- *'If your brother or sister wrongs you seven times a day and seven times comes back to you and says 'I am sorry' you must forgive...'*-(Luke 17,4). How does this word of Jesus challenge you?
- *What are the specific areas where I/we need to seek reconciliation, or the specific persons whom I/we need to be reconciled with?*
- *What would help to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation more meaningful to me/us in an inculturated sense?*

With this letter we launch the celebrations of the jubilee Year 2000 in Zambia. We urge all of you, lay men and women, religious and priests, to make your own the challenging words of our Holy Father:

"Everyone is asked to do as much as possible to ensure that the great challenge of the Year 2000 is not overlooked, for this challenge involves a special grace of the Lord for the Church and for the whole of humanity." (John Paul 11, TMA 55)

We entrust our jubilee celebrations to Mary, the Mother of mercy. May she be the star guiding our steps into the new Millennium. With Mary, let us give praise to God the Father, in the Holy Spirit, for the gift of Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

25th January 2000

The Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul

Archbishop M. Mazombwe	Bishop Chairman ZEC
Archbishop J. Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Cardinal A. Kozłowiecki S.J.	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Archbishop A. Mung'andu	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Bishop T.G. Mpundu	Bishop of Mpika
Bishop D. de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop A. Chisha	Bishop of Mansa
Bishop R. Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Bishop N. O'Regan SMA	Bishop of Solwezi
Bishop P. Duffy OMI	Bishop of Mongu
Bishop E. Patriarca	Bishop of Monze
Mgr. G. Lungu	Apost. Administrator, Chipata

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS
ON PARTICULAR SOCIAL CONCERNS**

**Education, Health, Security/Crime, and
the Public Order Act**

28th January 2000

By the year 2000, the poverty levels in Zambia were around 80% of the population. This is poverty that was evidenced by most people not having access to essential services for their basic needs. Hospitals lacked medicines, the health workers were demoralised with slave-like conditions of service. The educational system was in a similar crisis. Furthermore, the Country faced a rising wave of crime leading to insecurity. This situation was deemed to be untenable by the Bishops. The Bishops used the occasion of their annual plenary Conference to address these issues.

We, members of the Zambia Episcopal Conference assembled at Kapingila House, Lusaka, for our plenary meeting from 25th to 28th January 2000 have reflected on many issues of national interest. We wish to share our great concern on the following issues:

Education

We note with sadness that instead of improving our educational system, Government's recent policies seem to be only worsening the situation. In this vein, we are particularly concerned about the following:

1. Government's re-introduction of payment of rates for:
 - (a) all property owned by registered charities, training centres intended for capacity building for youths, the homeless and persons with disabilities;

(b) property comprising land used solely by a full-time educational institution, or for sporting purposes by that educational institution.

2. We strongly feel that this requirement is not only retrogressive but also will have very devastating effects on the already deplorable state of our education. Where will non-commercial and non-profit making educational institutions and training centres for the disabled get money to pay exorbitant rates? We feel a matter of such National importance should not be left to the discretion of local authorities.

3. The introduction of costly work permits for Missionaries working in our educational institutions is an antidote to quality education delivery. Why should somebody be required to pay so dearly for rendering voluntary service? We urge Government to take a leaf from the Malawian Government, which though not Christian, grants free employment permits to Missionaries.

4. The reduction of basic Teachers' training period to one year is a sure way of driving a final nail into our ailing educational system. How can we expect quasi-trained teachers to offer quality education which they don't possess themselves?

5. The recently adopted policy of not renewing contracts for qualified and experienced missionary and expatriate teachers in the face of dwindling numbers of indigenous teachers due to the effects of HIV/AIDS pandemic and emigration is not a positive move and must be seriously re-examined with a view to revoking it.

6. The ever worsening conditions of service for teachers have not only robbed the profession of its integrity and attraction, but has also led to serious brain-drain and vices such as corruption, bribery, etc. How can we

improve educational standards with such a demoralized and demotivated group of teachers? We therefore urge Government to take serious measures to redress this situation.

7. Poor Funding: - much as we sympathize with the Country's poor economic position, we still think that education as the basic foundation for all human and economic development should be Government's top priority when it comes to funding. It is baffling to see that in spite of the poor state of the economy, Government continues with its lavish spending on many non-essentials but not on education. It is not an exaggeration to say that poor funding is the root cause of most of problems in our educational system and we therefore urge the Government to address this problem once and for all.

Health

While we appreciate Government's efforts to rehabilitate the physical structures of our health institutions, we feel that this exercise alone not enough. Hence we are particularly concerned with:-

8. The on-going Doctors' strike and stand-off with Government. We add our voice to those of many others in supporting the doctors' stand which is not based on selfishness, but on a serious desire for professional service to the Nation. We deplore the loss of many lives as a result of this scenario. We therefore call upon the Government to lead the way in resolving this impasse.

9. Government's continued withdrawal of financial and other support from Church health institutions is another serious failure on setting the proper priorities. This move has affected not only the capacity and efficiency of health care delivery service in our institutions, but

also has antagonized the Church, its institutions and the people we serve. We are appalled by Government's failure to appreciate the valuable contribution of the Church in this critical area of national development. While we would not like our religious men and women working in Church health institutions to join the Civil doctors in their stand-off with Government, we are afraid that this might inevitably be the natural consequence if Government fails to address these problems promptly.

Security/Crime

10. Never before in the history of this Nation have we witnessed such a high rate of crime as now. We are particularly appalled by the sophisticated nature and increase in the number of crimes. The situation is even more frightening when this is directed against poor innocent people including women and children.

11. In this regard we wish to express our solidarity with the women from the NGOCC in their fight for a more professional, better-equipped and efficient Police Service that will be capable of ridding this Country of crime. We feel that the women are fighting for a very noble cause and request the authorities to handle their case with understanding.

Public Order Act

12. While we appreciate the necessity of the Public Order Act, we are disappointed with the biased manner of its implementation by the Police Service. While it has been very easy for Pro-MMD groups to obtain permits under this Act, opposition groups, NGO's and others have found it almost impossible to obtain such permits.

13. The arrest of women from the NGOCC for demon-

strating without a permit is a typical example. As we issue this communiqué, our own Religious Sisters (nuns) have been denied a permit to lobby our Members of Parliament or to demonstrate peacefully to air their concerns on some important National issues. We feel that this is denying people their democratic right to freedom of Assembly and expression and Government should address this.

14. Finally, we want to remind the Nation of two of the themes of this Jubilee Year, i.e. restoration and solidarity. Let us all work together in solidarity to restore this great Nation of ours to its glory and dignity. This can only be possible by ensuring perfect and efficient functioning of our educational, health and security systems.

Wishing you God's choicest blessings during this Jubilee Year.

Signed by the Catholic Bishops of Zambia.

Archbishop Medardo Mazombwe	Lusaka Archdiocese,
Chairman ZEC	
Bishop Noel O'Regan, SMA	Solwezi Diocese,
Vice-Chairman	
Archbishop James Spaita	Kasama Archdiocese
Bishop Denis De Jong	Ndola Diocese
Bishop Telesphore Mpundu	Mpika Diocese
Bishop Raymond Mpezela	Livingstone Diocese
Bishop Aaron Chisha	Mansa Diocese
Bishop Paul Duffy, OMI	Mongu Diocese
Bishop Emilio Patriarca	Monze Diocese
Msgr. George Lungu	
Chipata Diocese	

28th January 2000 – LUSAKA

**PASTORAL STATEMENT
OF THE ZAMBIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE ON
SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF THE
COUNTRY'S SOCIAL CRISIS**

10th June 2000

Introduction

"The Lord hears the cry of the poor" is a refrain from a popular religious song. But it is also an echo of a fundamental message in the Bible. Christians are challenged to hear the cry of the poor, the cry of those who suffer social problems in our midst today.

The Catholic Bishops have reminded their Church members – the wider Zambian public – of this challenge in a powerful 'pastoral statement' released on 16th June 2000. The release of the Statement coincided with a National day of prayer and fasting, a day called by the bishops to encourage Christians to be in solidarity with the suffering people around us and to beg God's help to effectively respond to that suffering.

The pastoral statement might be considered by some to be too 'political' But it is certainly not partisan in the sense of endorsing any particular party or candidate. It rather emphasises the responsibilities of all parties, politicians, Government and non-Governmental groups and the Church itself to recognise the serious nature of the social crisis in the Country and how necessary is an ordering of priorities that puts a response to the social crisis first.

The Church is promising a follow-up to this pastoral statement. Without such a well-planned and well supported follow-up, the Statement faces the tragedy of only offering more words to the great majority of Zambians (close to 80%) who need deeds, actions, and commitments.

"Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me: to break the unjust fetters, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break all yokes? Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, and sheltering the homeless poor; if you see someone lacking clothes, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own relatives?" (Isaiah 58:6-7)

1. In the context of a day of prayer and fasting to show solidarity in the face of our people's suffering, we share some reflections with you to ask you to consider how we can respond to the serious social crisis currently experienced in Zambia. While we thank God greatly that our beloved Country is not in the wars and social conflicts of our immediate neighbours, we also know that all is not well in the lives of the majority of our people.

2. Our Statement is a follow-up to the communiqué that the members of the Zambia Episcopal Conference released on 20 January 2000. We want to strongly express again our deep concern for the situation in our Country today and add our profound worry that nothing significant has happened to improve the situation. As you all know so very well, the greater majority of our sisters and brothers throughout the Country face very serious difficulties meeting the basic needs of daily survival in conditions unacceptable to human dignity.

3. It is for this reason that we have called for this day of prayer and fasting, to humbly beg from our loving Creator the wisdom and the courage for all of us to respond more energetically and more effectively to the very serious problems affecting our Country at this moment.

a) **The health system continues in a State of crisis.** Anyone visiting a Government hospital or clinic today cannot be shocked to find the absence of basis essentials. The strike of junior doctors continues unresolved into the

fifth month, a strike whose primary purpose has been to call attention to this shocking situation. We are sure that we are not alone in finding it extremely difficult to understand that Government's major response to this situation appears to be two-fold: bring into the Country for medical service foreign doctors at great expense, and take out of the Country for medical care high officials at great expense.

b) **Our education system is similarly in a State of crisis.** Recent assessments of Government primary and secondary educational systems, assessments undertaken by the Government itself, reveal the extremely disappointing level of quality and the very disturbing decline in quantity of education being offered to Zambian children. Moreover, both of our major universities move from day to day in circumstances of uncertainty regarding their future. Technical institutions face closure or curtailment of needed services for staff and students.

4. We know that there is no future development without healthy and educated citizens. Fancy shopping malls, expensive vehicles, extravagant social events, and high levels of consumption among a very small number of people, are by no means signs of economic or social progress in Zambia. In the face of increasing levels of poverty, no one can ignore the fact that the Country is in a severe social crisis.

5. What can we as Christians and citizens do? Our religious sisters have demonstrated and drawn attention to the suffering that they see and minister to every day around the Country. The Bishops have met with the President and top Government officials to discuss these issues. Doctors and other citizens have peacefully demonstrated and then been arrested.

6. But nothing seems to be happening that would measure up to the severity of the crisis. Surely more serious responses are called for by all Zambians, whatever their

positions or political persuasion. We know that we cannot enter peacefully and hopefully into the coming election year of 2001 with the Country in a state of social crisis.

7. We are frequently told that there are insufficient resources to meet the pressing needs of the people. But we repeat the analysis made by our Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and many other groups, that the primary challenge facing Zambia today is not resources but priorities. Is the perception of ordinary Zambians wrong when we ask again and again why money cannot be found for drugs in hospitals and books in schools, for rural feeder roads and provision of clean water and sanitation, but can easily be found for extensive foreign travel of high Government officials, importation of fancy vehicles, improvement of roads in low-density urban neighbourhoods, purchase of unnecessary materials, and many other expenditures that do not meet the pressing social needs of the people?

8. It is regrettable that even the meagre resources that are available for the common good and for the benefit of the most vulnerable members of our society are not directed towards priorities that answer essential needs; in other words essential needs are not provided. So what can we do to move forward in a peaceful and creative way? This is precisely why we have called for this day of prayer and fasting. We must beg God for the wisdom to know what actions must be taken to face the social crisis, to discern what is the best set of priorities, and to understand how we can work together. And we must beg God for the courage to take action even in the face of criticisms, slanders and threats. To be in solidarity in the face of our people's sufferings, we make the following calls:

a) We call upon our Church to continue in a true spirit of prayer and fasting that is guided by the words of Isaiah 58, demanding that we clearly act for charity and

justice. Church priorities must be examined in the light of the suffering of the people, and strong pressures for justice must be exercised.

b) We call upon our President to publicly acknowledge the extreme social crisis facing the Nation. Indeed, we believe that the threat from this social crisis to our National well being is as great as the threats from the situations in the Democratic Republic of Congo or Angola. The high level of commitment by the Head of State to respond to these external threats must be matched by an even higher level of commitment to domestic threats.

c) We call upon Government to recognise and appreciate the commitment and dedication of Church Management agencies serving in our Educational and Health institutions. This should be concretely demonstrated by ensuring that Church social institutions get their fair share of all resources necessary for their operations.

d) We call upon all our political parties, the party in power and the parties in opposition, to exercise maturity and good sense to stop bickering among themselves and to face cooperatively the extreme suffering of the people. How can citizens be expected to respect politicians who spend more of their time fighting with each other than dealing with the real problems of the Nations?

e) We call upon all Zambians to get involved in a political process that communicates to the President and the Members of Parliament their very strong concerns for the current social situation. We should be asking for meetings, writing letters and publicly expressing our demands for social responsibility on the part of the Government. Our democracy in Zambia requires that citizens exercise not only their right but also their duty to get involved.

f) We call upon those who are directly engaged in serving the people in health and educational institutions to

know that we are aware of their problems and that we are committed to moving beyond words, words in prayer or in statements like this, to actions in solidarity with their efforts.

g) Finally, we call upon our sisters and brothers who are indeed bearing the great burden of the social crisis, those who suffer because of violation of their rights to good medical care and education, to know that we are sensitive to their needs and are determined to move our Country in the direction of dignity and development for all.

What we have spoken about in this Statement may sound foreign to true religious concerns to some people. But we ask anyone with such a feeling to read again Isaiah 58 and to discern what the meaning of the Prophet's strong words is for us today. And for anyone who might feel that we are unrealistic in expecting real change to come in the midst of this social crisis, we ask them to reflect on the words of Jesus in Matthew 19:26: 'By human resources, these things are impossible. But with God, all things are possible.' Let us spend this day of prayer and fasting asking for the wisdom to discern how God calls us and the courage to trust in God's power as we respond.

**PRESS RELEASE
THE THIRD TERM BID
BY PRESIDENT CHILUBA**

25th January 2001



This statement may be short but it had an enormous positive impact on the country. This clear, unambiguous and courageous statement was the first serious challenge to the intention by the ruling party to change the republican constitution so that President Chiluba could have a third term in office. The Church called the third term bid unconstitutional and undemocratic. The major bone of contention was that the law must never be manipulated for the advantage of individuals. Doing that can lead to the ruining of the rule of law. Hence the call on President Chiluba to make it explicitly clear that he was committed to protect the constitutional provision of limiting the presidency to two terms.

This strong stance from the Church gave birth to a civil society based national mobilisation against the third term. The Church

was joined by the Law Association of Zambia and the Non-Governmental Coordinating Committee to form the OASIS Forum. The Forum mounted a nationwide campaign that led to President Chiluba's decision to decline going for the suggested third term. This was a major victory to preserve Zambia's fledgling democracy.

1. Following a meeting of Church Leaders from Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) held on 23rd January, 2001, we would like to state the Church's position on the ongoing debate of President Chiluba's third term bid.

2. The Church leadership is totally opposed to calls for the incumbent President to go for a third term, a move that is not only unconstitutional but also undemocratic.

3. The high standard of constitutional democracy set in the 1991 elections must be preserved in the 2001 elections. At that time, the peaceful, free and fair transition to multi-party democracy served as a shining example for all of Africa. The opportunity for Zambia to provide another such example must not be lost during this current election year.

4. For this reason the Church leadership in Zambia calls upon president Chiluba to again make explicitly clear his commitment to protect the constitutional provision limiting the presidency to two terms. He must exercise his responsibility to guide and educate the nation on such an important issue. We strongly commend him for his previous statement that he will not see a constitutional change. But we express our profound concern that of late this initial stand is being eroded by his current open encouragement of the debate.

5. The debate can cause dangerous confusion that risks undermining the democratic electoral process during this year. We also fear that this debate may be a deliberate ploy to divert national attention from real serious issues. We

strongly condemn those Ministers and District Administrators who have shed off their responsibility as national leaders choosing to spearhead this self content campaign.

6. Constitutional provisions must never be manipulated for the advantage of individuals or else the rule of law suffers. At this very moment when several of our neighbouring African states are in the midst of terrible conflicts, Zambia must be a bright beacon of hope in the region by upholding the clear intent of constitutional provisions adopted in 1991 and repeated in 1996.

7. After all, respect for and adherence to the constitution is part and parcel of good governance. We call upon President Chiluba to exercise statesmanship by unambiguously pledging to follow the current constitution of the Republic of Zambia, and thereby lead the people into a democratic electoral process that guarantees peaceful, free and fair elections for a new President in 2001.

25th January 2001

Signed:

Rev. Violet Sampa-Bredt	(General Secretary – CCZ)
Fr. Ignatius Mwebe	(Secretary General – ZEC)
Rev Thomas Lumba	(Executive Director – EFZ)

May God Almighty abundantly bless each and everyone of you.

Archbishop M. Mazombwe,	President – ZEC
Fr. I. P. Mwebe,	Secretary General – ZEC

For and on behalf of the Zambia Episcopal Conference
10th June 2000

I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME

**A Pastoral Letter
of the Catholic Bishops of Zambia
20th June 2001**

To mark the world Refugee Day in 2001, the Bishops decided to raise concern on the plight of refugees in Zambia. The continued fighting in Congo DRC led to thousands of people seeking refugee status in Zambia in 2001. This raised the number of refugees in Zambia to more than 250,000. This big influx of refugees made Zambia the Country with the highest refugees in Southern Africa. This new influx of refugees was in addition to the long term Angolan refugees some of whom have now been in Zambia for more than thirty years. Some families are now in their third generation in Zambia having grandchildren born to them since they arrived.

It is the official treatment of these refugees and growing xenophobia which prompted the Bishops to issue this Pastoral Letter. They illustrate the severe restrictions that the Zambian law puts on refugees making it very difficult for these refugees to rebuild their lives. Furthermore, what is supposed to be a provisional status has now become a permanent status as refugees for refugees who came many years ago Their Children and grandchildren are now technically stateless as they are classified as refugees even though they have been born in Zambia..

It is in this light that the bishops called for law reform to reclassify the long term refugees as residents so that they can rebuild their lives. They implored all Zambians to have the Christian spirit of welcoming strangers as Jesus Christ taught us,, He himself having been a "refugee" when his parents fled to Egypt from King Herod in Israel.

The Church hears the suffering cry of all who are uprooted from their own land, of families forcefully separated, of those who are unable to find a stable home anywhere. She senses the anguish of those without rights, without any security, at the mercy of every kind of exploitation, and she supports them in their unhappiness. (John Paul II, Message World Migrations and Refugee Day 2000)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1. On the 20th of June we celebrate the World Refugee Day. Later in the year (August/September), South Africa (Durban) will host the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. It is a valuable opportunity for the Christians of Zambia to reflect on the situations that have brought to us so many brothers and sisters in need of protection and support in rebuilding their lives torn by violence. It is also time to reflect on how our society is responding to their plight and to examine our conscience in front of the Risen Lord.

Jesus Himself Was A Refugee

2. Jesus himself was a refugee at a certain time in his life. The exclamation of Simeon in the Gospel according to Luke still resounds among us:

"See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction ... Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light". (Lk 2, 34-35).

3. And so it was: the intentions in the heart of the powerful of that time were uncovered and Jesus had to be taken by Joseph and Mary to Egypt, fleeing persecution from Herod. Matthew narrates it:

"After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you for Herod will soon be looking for the child in order to kill him." Joseph got

up, took the child and his mother, and left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod". (Mt 2,13-16).

4. Today some hidden intentions in our hearts are uncovered by our attitudes towards those who have been forced to leave their homes fleeing war and persecution. Very often they have experienced violence directly in their families: many of them have lost close relatives, seen killings and massacres, suffered unjust imprisonment and torture, and experienced the abuse of armed people against peaceful civilian populations. When they made the difficult decision to abandon their Country of origin, they left behind all that they had to live for: extended family and tribe, profession and assets, house and land. They come to us destitute, looking for protection and for help to rebuild their lives. But they also come with all their potential to contribute to humanity, advance development, and enrich our society with their traditions and culture.

Zambia As A Country Of Asylum

5. Since the beginning of our existence as an independent nation, Zambia has been a safe haven for refugees coming from other countries in the region. We received refugees from the wars of liberation in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa, and also from civil wars like the one in Mozambique. Those refugees were able to go back to their countries following the end of the conflicts and the arrival of peace. The Zambian people and their Government have always fostered peace and stability in the region, as a way of contributing to the prevention and solution of refugee situations.

6. When peace efforts fail, we know that it is the human and religious duty of every Zambian to welcome refugees and to offer them the opportunity to participate in our social setting, so that they can rebuild their lives and contribute to ours in the most positive way. We

commend the Government for its efforts in cooperation with UNHCR and other agencies over the years. At the same time, we hope that the standards achieved in the treatment of refugees by Zambia won't be degraded but improved in the future.

The Action Of The Church In Favour Of Refugees

7. The Catholic Church in Zambia has been present on the side of refugees and asylum seekers for decades, trying to contribute to the efforts of other organizations. It has offered pastoral attention to the refugees and has channelled assistance sent to them by donors. The Catholic Commissions for Justice and Peace have promoted the rights of the refugees and advocated on their behalf. Some diocesan Departments of Development have worked in support of new arrivals and refugee initiatives in the developmental field. Catholic agencies, like the Jesuit Refugee Service, have been formally mandated by the Zambian Episcopal Conference to enhance the capacity of the Church to answer to the challenges posed by the different refugee situations in the Country. A program led by the Archdiocese of Lusaka Refugee Desk and the Jesuit Refugee Service is advocating in favour of refugees and asylum seekers detained under no criminal charges. Furthermore, hundreds if not thousands of priests, religious and lay members of the Church have committed themselves to organizations that help refugees, or through personal initiatives in support of refugees close to them. As a concrete manifestation of the fraternity of the children of God, orphanages, education facilities, and health services under the care of the Church accept refugees on the same grounds as Zambian citizens

8. This way the Catholic Church in Zambia is answering to the call of the Synod of Africa:

“One of the bitterest fruits of wars and economic hardships is the sad phenomenon of refugees and displaced persons, a phenomenon which, as the Synod mentioned, has reached tragic dimensions. The ideal solution is the re-establishment of a just peace, reconciliation and economic development. It is therefore urgent that national, regional and international organizations should find equitable and long-lasting solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons. In the meantime, since the Continent continues to suffer from the massive displacement of refugees, I make a pressing appeal that these people be given material help and offered pastoral support wherever they may be, whether in Africa or on other Continents”. (John Paul II, Ecclesia in Africa, #119)

Issues of Concern

9. On the grounds of this experience of the Church in regards to refugees and asylum seekers, we detect some concerning issues taking place among us. In light of this, we want to propose to the faithful for their own reflection and, if necessary, for a change of attitude that follows the conversion of the heart.

Growing Xenophobia

10. The first issue is the increase of negative feelings towards outsiders among the Zambian people, clearly fostered by a xenophobic campaign developed by some elements of the mass media. Let us remember the words of the Holy Father on this matter:

“The mass media can play an important role, both positive and negative. Their activity can foster a proper evaluation and better understanding of the problems of the “new arrivals”, dispelling prejudices and emotional reactions, or instead, it can breed rejection and hostility, impeding and jeopardizing proper integration”. (John Paul II, Message WMRD 1998)

11. Reading the newspapers, one easily detects a campaign that intends to identify refugees and asylum seekers as criminals, blaming them for many of the difficulties that our society is suffering. While only the author of a crime can be blamed for it, refugees are repeatedly criminalized as a group. No other sector of our society would be subjected to such treatment. We watch with dismay as even politicians and civil servants – who should orientate our people in the respect of human rights and the rule of law – sometimes produce statements which tend to foster rejection in disgrace towards our fellow Africans.

12. We are obliged to note that any criminal accusation must be addressed exclusively against the subjects in the case and must be followed by prosecution in court according to the Law. General criminalization of a social group is an expression of racism and xenophobia completely contrary to the Law of God and to the tradition of hospitality that the Zambian people have always honoured.

13. With this public remark we fulfil the command of Jean Paul II:

“It is necessary to guard against the rise of new forms of racism or xenophobic behaviour, which attempt to make these brothers and sisters of ours scapegoats for what may be difficult local situations.

When an understanding of the problem is conditioned by prejudice and xenophobic attitudes, the Church must not fail to speak up for brotherhood and to accompany it with acts testifying to the primacy of charity”. (John Paul II, Message WMRD 1996)

14. We are convinced that any difficulty arising between refugees and Zambian people can be generally solved through dialogue, or through lawful enforcement of the current regulations if dialogue were to fail. There is

no need or justification for abuse – verbal or otherwise – against those we are committed to protect from the abuse that forced them to flee their own countries.

Restriction of Rights and Difficulties to Rebuild the Life in Zambia

15. A second issue of concern for the pastors of the Catholic Church in Zambia has to do with refugees who have stayed among us for a long time. While Zambia and its authorities are to be praised for their policy of open borders to individuals seeking asylum, their initial treatment of those asylum seekers, and the allocation of land for them to settle on while in our Country, some basic rights are withheld from refugees by the Law of the land. They include such basic rights as the freedom of movement, the right to freely engage in salaried work or start a business, the right to property, and the right to a Nationality.

16. When the refugee situation is brief, these rights may be felt as secondary in contrast with more primary needs. But Zambia has received refugees fleeing long-lasting conflicts, like the ones in Angola or in the Great Lakes region. These conflicts have gone on for decades and it is feared that they are likely to last many more years. The events in some of these regions are so terrible that it is difficult to imagine refugees being able to go back home in their lifetimes. The length of stay of some refugees in Zambia has already produced a second and even a third generation of persons born in the Country that do not possess Zambian Nationality and are subject to the same restrictions as their parents and grandparents.

17. For thousands of our brothers and sisters, their provisional situation as refugees in Zambia has thus become permanent. The restriction on their basic rights is preventing many of them from rebuilding normal lives. It makes them vulnerable to all kinds of abuse and exploitation. When it lasts for years and decades, this situation has to be considered decidedly inhuman.

18. Consequently, we call on the Zambian people to offer such long-term refugees opportunities to participate in all aspects of our social life, so that they can integrate themselves into our society and rebuild their lives in safety and stability. Against the xenophobic statements that are continuously served up for public opinion, we call the attention of the Zambian people to the great potential for contribution to the Country's development that would result from integration of long-term refugees with whom we enjoy mutual familiarity.

19 This call has a special meaning for the Zambian Catholic faithful and their pastors. It is our duty to keep our congregations, social services, justice and peace work, and developmental initiatives open to those who desire a place where they can feel part of us, protected and welcomed in a communion of fraternity, the Family of God. Whatever their origin or religion, this is requested from us by our faith, as the Pope remarks:

"Catholicity is not only expressed in the fraternal communion of the baptized, but also in the hospitality extended to the stranger, whatever his religious belief, in the rejection of all racial exclusion or discrimination, in the recognition of the personal dignity of every man and woman and, consequently, in the commitment to furthering their inalienable rights". (John Paul II, Message WMRD 1999)

20. Many refugees and asylum seekers can be counted among the poorest of the poor, due to the losses they suffered when leaving their Country and to the legal restrictions imposed on them afterwards. The Catholic Church in Zambia feels itself bound to them by the commitment assumed by the Bishops of Africa in their Synod:

"Strengthened by faith and hope in the saving power of Jesus, the Synod Fathers concluded their work by renewing their commitment to accept the challenge of being instruments of

salvation in every area of the life of the peoples of Africa. "The Church", they declared, "must continue to exercise her prophetic role and be the voice of the voiceless", so that everywhere the human dignity of every individual will be acknowledged". (John Paul II, Ecclesia in Africa, #70).

21. Finally, we call on the authorities to reconsider their policies and to develop legal schemes which allow refugees to recover their full rights when they are forced to stay in Zambia due to the continuation of conflict or persecution in their countries of origin. We also call on the authorities to step up their efforts to protect refugees and asylum seekers from any abuse or arbitrariness resulting from the restriction of their rights by the Law.

22. In the end of times, we all shall be judged by the fate of our brothers and sisters in proportion to our responsibility in that fate and to the power we had to improve it.

Again in the words of the Holy Father:

"Jesus' demanding assertion: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt 25:35) retains its power in all circumstances and challenges the conscience of those who intend to follow in his footsteps. For the believer, accepting others is not only philanthropy or a natural concern for his fellow man. It is far more, because in every human being he knows he is meeting Christ, who expects to be loved and served in our brothers and sisters, especially in the poorest and neediest". (John Paul II, Message WMRD 1998)

Signed:

Archbishop Medardo Mazombwe – (ZEC President)

For and on behalf of all the Catholic Bishops of Zambia

Zambia Episcopal Conference

20th June 2001, Lusaka

World Refugee Day

DISCIPLESHIP AND CITIZENSHIP
A PASTORAL LETTER
ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE AND
THE 2001 GENERAL ELECTIONS
From the Catholic Bishops of Zambia
20th July 2001

The tripartite elections, were eagerly awaited by everyone, politicians and the citizens alike. This were important elections since the Country was going to hold presidential, parliamentary, and local Government elections at the same time, hence the term – tripartite!

After ten years in power, and presiding over a social situation that the Bishops had in the same year described as a "crisis", the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) Government faced stiff competition from a motley of political parties.

As the time of the elections draw near, the Bishops called upon all Christians to show their true colours as true and good followers of Jesus Christ as well as good law-abiding citizens. This was the time for Christians to look for leaders who are God-fearing, upright, and who have love for the people. This was a time when Christians were challenged to get involved by turning out in huge numbers to participate in the elections.

"Yes, I know what plans I have in mind for you. Yahweh declares, plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future full of hope." [Jeremiah 29:11]

To all Catholic Christians and all peace loving Zambians! May the peace and justice of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

Introduction

1. The political climate in the Country, especially as we draw near to this year's tripartite elections, is extremely worrying to us. It is in the light of this challenging

political climate and in keeping with our tradition, that we address this pastoral letter to you as a guide on what is expected of Christians.

2. This year's elections will be very important because we shall have three elections at the same time, hence being called tripartite. We shall go to the polls not only to elect the new republican president, but also the new members of parliament and new Councillors.

3. The concern we have is that the depth of the current social crisis and loss of trust in the political system may have a serious negative effect on the electoral process, and thus affect the peaceful future of our Country. Having said that, we must hasten to add that there are also signs of hope such as the resilience of our people in the face of these deep socio-economic problems, as well as the maturity that Zambians have shown in the past elections.

Today's Socio-Political Context

"The foundation of good Government must be established on the sound basis of laws which protect the rights and define the obligations of citizens... That is why the (African) Synod rightly considered that an authentic democracy, which respects pluralism, 'is one of the principal routes along which the Church travels together with the people...The lay Christian, engaged in the democratic struggle according to the spirit of the Gospel, is the sign of a Church which participates in the promotion of the rule of law everywhere in Africa'" [The Church in Africa, #112]

4. In our Statements of 28th January 2001, 10th June 2000, and the one which we issued together with other Churches, of 25th January 2001, we called for solidarity in the face of our Country's deepening social crisis as we move towards elections.

5. We have just come out of a trying period of prolonged strikes by civil servants, nurses, and teachers. These strikes indicate just how appalling our socio-economic conditions have become. Not only do many of our people get a pittance for salaries, but are also doubly hit by the high cost of living. We are told that over eighty percent of our people, eight million of our brothers and sisters, are living in abject poverty. Our health and education systems are barely surviving on shoestring budgets.

6. In the face of these deep social problems, our politicians are often perceived to be more interested in political power than in serving the people. The failure by politicians to deliver on their promises has alienated a lot of people from taking a keen interest in political issues. Today people see many politicians jump from one party to another with ease, as they seem to seek the party that would offer them the best options to rise to the top quickly. The proliferation of political parties, most of which do not have a strong agenda, is another issue that has made our people sceptical regarding politics.

7. It is not surprising therefore that we are experiencing serious political apathy in Zambia today. We have already seen the cost of this apathy in the dismal start to the registration of voters. This is a major source of worry to us. We fear that this apathy may end up defeating the democracy we are trying to build in Zambia. Apathy is destructive. It means denying oneself the chance to elect leaders of one's choice.

8. Election time is an appropriate time to take our politicians to task. They should tell the Nation how committed they have been in addressing such important areas as health, education, and agriculture, and meeting the crucial challenge of eradicating poverty. Aspiring candidates should tell the Nation what they would do to promote the common good.

9. However, people can only take politicians to task if they discover the connection between politics and bread and butter issues. This is where civil society and the Church come in. We feel we are not doing enough to prepare our Country adequately for issue-based free and fair elections. At the moment, our civic education strategies seem to end up in workshops only. We need to have a greater impact on the ground – especially in rural areas.

10. We also note with sadness that institutions of democracy that can make a difference to the electoral process, like the Electoral Commission, and the Permanent Human Rights Commission, continue to suffer from inadequate funding that makes them weak and ineffective.

11. Our greatest worry so far is the alarming growth and persistence of political violence as was reported in the Mkushi, Chama, and Chawama by-elections. Sadly it has even reached the level of using firearms in petty political conflicts, as was the case in Kabwata recently! Political parties should not regard themselves as enemies who should eliminate one another. They need each other. An opposition leader is not an enemy to be eliminated but a colleague with different political views. We have also sadly noticed the development of a culture of cadres, such as the Ku-Klux-Klan, who are becoming a law unto themselves, taking the place of law enforcement agencies and taking control over political decisions. We call upon political leaders to abandon this practice and promote a real multi-party spirit.

12. Finally, there is need to level the playing field well ahead of the elections. In spite of the clear provisions in the Electoral Act and the Electoral Code of Conduct, there is very little effort to curb the malpractices like bribery and the use of Government resources during elections. The role

of District Administrators, for instance, as civil servants in the electoral process, should also be clarified sooner rather than later by the Government, according to the clear instructions of the law that forbid civil servants to participate directly in partisan politics. Their involvement within the structures of the ruling party, where many of them hold active political office, makes them a liability during the electoral process as they are poised to give the ruling party undue advantage when we come to the actual elections.

The Social Teaching Of The Church

13. Pope John-Paul II has reminded us of the importance the Church attaches to elections and true democracy in the following words:

"The Church values the democratic system in as much as it ensures the participation of citizens in making political choices, guarantees to the governed the possibility of electing and holding accountable those who govern them, and replacing them through peaceful means when appropriate." [John-Paul II, One Hundred Years, #46]

14. We chose the theme of "discipleship and citizenship" to represent the two-fold calling for Christians in the political arena. As law-abiding Christian citizens, we are expected to respond positively to the legitimate demand of the State to go and vote. However, as Christians, disciples of Jesus, our response to the State is one that should be guided by Christ's example of the strong values of justice, concern for the poor, fairness, tolerance, honesty, respect for the other, and personal integrity, among others. This is how we can demonstrate our true love of neighbour as the lawyer learned from Jesus when he asked about what he needed to do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10: 25-37).

15. Election time is an opportune time for Christians to use peaceful and non-corrupt means to elect leaders of their choice. We also call upon Christians with leadership qualities to stand as candidates so that they can infuse politics with Christian values. The politically charged climate in Zambia today demands that every Christian leads by example. We are all called upon to take the lead in bringing about peaceful, free and fair elections.

16. The Church's social teaching speaks of politics as a vocation, a way of building up society for the common good. This is something we who are baptised cannot ignore; we cannot put it aside as unimportant.

17. Discipleship demands from the Christian, during election time, to show special tolerance to other people with opposing views. It is a time to foster peace by showing great restraint and refraining from acts of violence. It is also the time to respond to the moral and legal duty to participate fully in the choosing of new political leaders.

18. We are also called upon to be prophetic, to question and expose malpractices like bribery and corruption. The Church cannot be comfortable in an environment of corruption and violence. We are called upon to stand up for what is right. To play this role effectively, we need to be guided by the Holy Spirit through personal prayer. In doing this we can help to minimise the negative trends that mar our electoral process.

Call To Action

Christians

"In the pluralistic societies of our day, it is especially due to the commitment of Catholics in public life that the Church can exercise a positive influence. Whether they be professionals

or teachers, businessmen or civil servants, law enforcement agents or politicians, Catholics are expected to bear witness to goodness, truth, justice and love of God in their daily life. "The task of the faithful lay person... is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, especially in those places where only a lay person is able to render the Church present" [John-Paul II, The Church in Africa, #108]

19. The words of our Pope remind all of us Christians of the values we need to carry over into all aspects of our life especially the electoral process. In this sense, we urge all Christians to go out in huge numbers to register as voters and to go out to vote on Election Day.

20. We encourage those who feel specially called to serve to put themselves up as candidates. Politics need people with high credibility. Their presence in the political arena can bring gospel values to the political process. They should not deny the people of Zambia quality leadership

21. Christians must use election time to critically evaluate the candidates who put themselves up for elections. They must be evaluated against agreed criteria of values inspired by the social teaching of the Church.

The Christian voter must vote for a candidate who is:

- *God fearing*
- *Respectful of human life and the dignity of each person*
- *Ready to work for the common good*
- *A person of integrity*
- *Concerned about the poor and vulnerable people*
- *Ready to serve not to be served*
- *Of high moral behaviour*
- *Of proven good personal background*

Those who have already been in office must be evaluated on their record in office.

- *How much did they exemplify service to the people?*
- *Did they always visit the electorate?*
- *Were they accused of any impropriety while in office?*
- *What is their stand on such critical issues like education, health, agriculture, and fighting poverty?*
- *Did they show a special concern for the poor?*
- *Did they enrich themselves instead of helping people?*

Government Leaders

"The Synod prayed fervently to the Lord that there would arise in Africa holy politicians – both men and women – and there would be saintly Heads of State, who profoundly love their own people and wish to serve rather than be served" [Church in Africa, #111]

22. We call upon Government leaders to provide an impartial framework for the electoral process. They are privileged to ensure that the provisions of the Electoral Code of Conduct and Electoral Act are applied strictly and fairly.

23. We specifically ask for the suspension of the Presidential Fund during the general elections and in election areas during by-elections. Government leaders should also refrain from threatening people with "development sanctions" if they voted for other parties.

The Police

24. We call upon the police to act professionally. Theirs is a cardinal duty to maintain a level playing field for all political parties. They are expected to be impartial in all situations. They should clamp down on violence and arrest promptly those caught in bribery scandals regardless of what political parties they belong to.

The Media

25. We call upon the media to preserve with pride its noble duty to inform and educate the citizenry during the electoral period and to promote intelligent debate of the issues. It should be professional and ensure full and fair coverage of all parties. We also expect the media to raise pertinent issues for National debate. In particular, we request the Government press, radio and television to give fair coverage to all political parties.

Political Parties

26. We call upon all political parties to stick to issues rather than engage in trading insults with other political parties. They should give the voters clear options on specific policies to be pursued. They should show great restraint in dealing with those in other parties. During election time there ought to be a firm exercise of inter-party and intra-party tolerance. Our plural democracy is founded on respecting opposing views. We urge the political parties to strengthen their internal systems and structures to curb the rising hooliganism. Explicit rejection of violence should come immediately and clearly from the highest authorities in all parties.

Civil Society Groups

27. We call upon the civil society groups to build upon the mature vigilance exhibited during the third term

campaign to ensure that electoral malpractices are minimized. We encourage them to engage in community based public education. Let them promote civic education that is focused on helping people make informed choices in free and fair fashion.

Church Leaders

28. We call upon our fellow Church leaders, at all levels, to remain strictly non-partisan but vigilant. Our responsibility is to give people direction and advice, not to take sides. We have a challenge to lead by example. Political leaders will be looking at our integrity for inspiration. But the challenge to remain non-partisan should never take away the duty to keep our prophetic voice alive. It is our duty to denounce electoral malpractices.

Conclusion

29. In the days ahead of us as we approach these important elections, we will make efforts to cooperate with Government officials, political leaders, civil society organisations and all peace-loving Zambians to promote the environment necessary for a good electoral process. In these efforts, we will be encouraging the "discipleship and citizenship" so necessary for the future of our beloved Zambia.

Finally, we invite you to prayer for a successful outcome of the electoral process and impart upon you God's blessings.

20th July 2001

Lusaka

Archbishop Medardo J. Mazombwe	Archbishop of Lusaka - President, ZEC
Archbishop James Spaita	Archbishop of Kasama
Cardinal Adam. Kozłowiecki, SJ	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Archbishop Adrian Mung'andu	Archbishop Emeritus, Lusaka
Bishop Telesphore-George Mpundu	Bishop of Mpika
Bishop Dennis de Jong	Bishop of Ndola
Bishop Aaron A. Chisha	Bishop of Mansa
Bishop Raymond Mpezele	Bishop of Livingstone
Bishop Noel O'Regan, SMA	Bishop of Solwezi
Bishop Paul Duffy, OMI	Bishop of Mongu
Bishop Emilio Patriaca	Bishop of Monze
Mgr. George Lungu Chipata	Apostolic Administrator,

POSTSCRIPTUM

Ecumenical Voices

From the Christian Council of Zambia...

Pastoral letters are a guide form in which the church seeks to communicate its mind on issues of life and living as they relate to the gospel of justice peace and integrity of creation. Pastoral letters inform Christians who are members of the body of Christ about their leaders spiritual voice and direction. They also, to some extent address the general public who may not necessarily belong to the church to understand the conscious of the church on a given subject matter.

Pastoral letters are very important because they also serve as a form of discernment of the will of God on humanity in a given situation. The church issues them to guide and inspire its flock in the desired direction. They form the basis for the unity in the church on various hot subjects.

The pastoral letters are also very important since they represent the memory of the Church. The letters are a reminder of the positions the Church has held on various issues at different times in history. It is therefore necessary to keep these pastoral letters and statements as a reminder of the what the Church has said before.

Rev. Japhet Ndhlovu
General Secretary
Christian Council of Zambia

From the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia...

Consistence, compassion, care/concern and courage are the best descriptive words for these Pastoral Letters and Statements. These Letters and Statements have indeed met the felt needs of our people countrywide. As a voice for and to the silent majority these Letters and Statements have acted as a moral conscience to fallen mankind. Selfishness is at the core of all human behaviour. One can be selfish by not participating in any cause especially when it doesn't affect one directly. Selfishness can also be traced to those who only want to benefit themselves.

The message from these Letters and Statements has been:

Consistent in that they have spoken the same way to different political regimes. What was condemned in Kaunda's era was also condemned in Chiluba's and is still being condemned in Mwanawasa's era. **Compassionate** in that they have addressed the sufferings of people across the board. This has been the driving factor of the Pastoral Letters and Statements. **Care/concern** in that they took to heart to do something about the situation and not just fold arms and pray that the problems will fly away. **Courageous** in that no amounts of threats/intimidation from government and others managed to have Pastoral Letters and Statements tone down their message. What needed to be said/addressed was done as required without fear or favour.

I would like to add my voice to many who have appreciated these Letters and Statements and it's a welcome move to have them bound in a Book.

Bishop Paul Mususu
Executive Director - EFZ

The Church and State - Zambia's Experience

The role of the Christian Church in the life of the Zambian Society has been the fulfilment of the words of Christ: YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE WORLD (MATTHEW 5:13). The Church has also been THE CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION. This is so in the sense that the Church has always spoken out and registered its concerns during the time of political strife in the Country. In this way it has provided guidance and direction in the political development of the Nation. A good example is what happened in 1979 when the State wanted to introduce scientific socialism in Zambian Schools. The three mother bodies jointly produced the 1979 letter on Marxism, Humanism and Christianity. The other one of 1982 followed this. The Church succeeded in preventing scientific socialism from being introduced in schools as a subject.

History has shown that starting from the early 1950s when the British Colonial masters made attempts to resist the growth of African Nationalism by creating the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the Church became the voice of the voiceless. At the end of the 1970s there was a new development emerging when the mainline Churches began to embrace each other in addressing National issues together. The Christian Council of Zambia, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, and the Zambia Episcopal Conference jointly signed most of the pastoral letters, statements and declarations. This kind of co-operation among Christian Churches is unique to Zambia and should be maintained. In this way the Church has also become the partner of the State in the process of nation building.

I am tempted to believe that because of this role that the Church has been playing in Zambia, the Nation has been spared from experiencing major calamities that

have befallen other countries on the continent of Africa. However the political situation is far from getting any better. Therefore my prayer is that the spirit which is there now among the three mother bodies should continue so as to ensure that the Church in Zambia will be able to face the new challenges of the 21st Century.

Rev. Foston D. Sakala

Catholic Voices

I would like to welcome the publication of this book concerning the collective instructions on moral issues by the leadership of the Christian community in Zambia. It is about time these important documents were presented in a methodical single volume publication.

As a layperson among those addressed, it gives me pleasure to state a few facts concerning these Pastoral Letters. The Christian community listens and listens with great interest. The moral teachings of the Bishops shape our behaviour and temper our actions. The additional value in this document lies in the capture of Christian Light that is shed on current issues. The nature of many of the subjects tackled bear interests of justice and peace in our society. The framework of these Pastoral Letters guide God's people in a mature search for living faith in the turmoil of a fast moving world that we live in. These documents present true guidance to our faith during these difficult days. Above all, researchers into the history of our Church and of Christian history at the beginning of the twenty-first century, will be greatly assisted in assembling facts to assist them judge what kind of living faith was practiced in the preceding decades. Those studying our catechism in the fast changing world will take delight in reading this book.

I strongly commend this book as a practical guide to the novices, deacons and intellectuals as compulsory reading before venturing into the Saving Ministry of our Church.

Emmanuel Gabriel Kasonde

A Catholic Woman's Voice

Our religious book market is flooded with volumes of books about 'Spirituality'. This book comes as a response to some of our questions about what the church has said in the past on moral and social issues. It also comes as a resource that can enrich the religious life of the entire church.

This collection of pastoral letters which are highly readable gives us a tool to analyse how vigorously and sometimes eloquently the church has addressed many social issues affecting the people of God.

As a practicing Catholic, I find that this book is suitable for Catholics of all persuasions — whether devout, practicing, grudgingly observant or lapsed. Its carefully and chronologically set letters makes it a 'look-back book' and, in a sense, a partial summation of the concerns that the church has raised since the late nineteen-fifties.

The issues raised in the Pastoral Letters and Statements challenge all of us Catholics to practice our faith with greater dedication. No discerning person will read it without being filled with a deeper sense of responsibility. I hope and pray that many lay people will read it and use it to enrich their knowledge on some of the social teachings of the church. I also hope this book will stimulate conversation in our Small Christian Communities about how to live with integrity and hope amid the challenges of our time.

Josephine Shamwana-Lungu

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