

Statement by the meeting between Bishop Brian Melvin Marajh, Rectors, Priest-in-Charge and Church and Chapel wardens of the Diocese of George at St. Simon's Oudtshoorn on Saturday 01 April 2017

It is with a profound sense of sadness and disappointment that we note the reshuffle of the Cabinet by the President of the Republic, and the axing of the Minister of Finance and his deputy amongst others. The President's claim of a breach of confidence in, and breakdown of trust relationship between himself and the Minister of Finance, informed by a seriously flawed Intelligence Report, represents a serious undermining of the principle of the law.

The President's claim that the decision was taken to improve effectiveness and efficiency is a flagrant lie and is proof that he is pursuing his own personal narrow interest at the expense of the poor and most vulnerable of this country. It is evident that the reshuffle is targeting Treasury and that it will impact on its critical functions and those of other organisations in the Financial cluster like the Revenue Service, the Reserve Bank and other financial banking regulatory institutions.

We call upon the leadership of our church in the Diocese of George, Southern Cape to give guidance and leadership to those committed members in the faith community with regards to directed and unswerving action to fight corruption and the looting of state resources for personal gain and enrichment of individuals that contribute to issues of poverty, inequality and unemployment. The gospel entrusted to us demands of us to unite our people around a common course to fight the scourge of corruption and narrow interest, an agenda pushed by the President and his cohorts.

We as a collective call on all Councillors of the ruling party in the different towns of our Diocese to explain their stance on the President's action as representatives of the dreams and aspirations of the people and how they intend to forge and display unity of purpose on this divisive issue.

It has become evident that change and renewal will not come from within the ruling party, captured by the President and his corrupt business cronies.

We call upon our constituent members to make known their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs through organised protest action with other partners in the faith community, Non-governmental Organisations and other organs of civil society and to reject the President's establishment of a ruling cabal.

We also remind ourselves of the need to exhibit integrity, selflessness, honesty, trustworthiness and commitment in our service to our constituent members if we are to expect the same from elected representatives in communities, provinces and institutions of governance like Parliament.

Let us be reminded of and pay attention to our own Archbishop Thabo's assertion that we are not saved by works, but for works, as we strive to make a meaningful difference in society and add value to the lives of all South Africans. Let us pray and work for truth and goodness.