



Newsletter of the

**CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE
DEVELOPMENT
AND PEACE-Lukulu, Mongu Diocese, Zambia**

[Email: ccjdplukulu@hotmail.com](mailto:ccjdplukulu@hotmail.com)

Sancta Maria Catholic Church, Lukulu, Box 950020 Tel/Fax 07-250046

VOL 1, NO.6

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2006

ELECTIONS 2006 SPECIAL EDITION

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE



*T*hursday, 28th September, 2006 is Election Day. All registered Zambian Voters are encouraged to cast their vote on this special day in the history of our country. As we prepare for elections, we wish to speak to the people of Lukulu on matters relating to the electoral process. We feel this will inspire Zambian citizens to take interest and get involved in this important political process. We will focus on the following areas:

Candidates

*W*e are aware of the problematic area of how political parties initiated the process of nominating candidates to contest the tripartite elections at various levels. It has become a constant cry from party members that this process is fraught with undemocratic practices. Choices of the people are often ignored. Adopted candidates end up as those favoured by the top leadership of the parties. This has led to the emergence of leaders who are arrogant, disrespectful and contemptuous of the will of the people. For such leaders, blind party allegiance, becomes the beginning and end of their political life.

Corruption

There is still a generalized state of corruption in the country at individual and institutional levels. Corruption and selfishness among the people entrusted by the citizens to run public institutions and governance structures, has been killing this nation slowly. We need women and men of integrity; humble leaders who truly want to serve and not to be served. It is the duty of voters not to vote into office people who see political power as an opportunity for self-enrichment, in the midst of abject poverty for the majority of Zambians.

Campaigns

We acknowledge that our elections have been relatively peaceful. This is an achievement we need to acknowledge and yet still needs to be consolidated. For Zambia to continue enjoying peaceful electoral process, the greater responsibility in this case is on leaders of political parties to instill a sense of civility in their followers to avoid insults, slander and falsehood. Instead, we must all endeavour to ensure that real national issues become the center of our political discourse.

Bribery

Related to campaigns is the issue of bribery and other forms of corrupt practices. Beer, food, chitenge materials and money are freely given out. We also see the normally forgotten chiefs being visited in the name of courtesy calls. Our own churches have also fallen victim of such visits where donations are ceremoniously announced. Bribery is dangerous to our democracy and demeaning to our people. We call upon Zambians to denounce these practices and dishonour the perpetrators. Candidates who resort to such practices have nothing to offer in terms of leadership and should not be voted for. This year God has blessed us with a good harvest. We should not show ingratitude to God by using the excuses of poverty and hunger as our reason for being willing recipients of bribes. We need to be strong and maintain our dignity even in our poverty.

Special Appeals

Voters

We call upon all Zambians who registered as voters to turn up and cast their votes. Never get tired of voting, as your apathy will only give greater chance to opportunists to carry the day. Attend rallies of various political parties and candidates and listen to what they have to say. This will help enrich your knowledge when deciding which candidate or party to vote for. As voters, you must pick issues and interrogate political parties and candidates on those issues to seek their position and planned action if they are elected. Such issues are rural development, food youth employment, education and health care should be at the center of the campaign discussion. Ask the candidates to commit themselves to sign performance pacts with you, over which you can hold them to account and monitor them once they are elected.

Youth

We appeal to our youth not to be used as instruments of violence and intimidation. Reject being used in this manner. Instead, demand programmes that have meaning to your future from party leaders. You should also endeavour to seek political office as a way of channeling your energies to good ends.

Finally, we appeal to people of Lukulu to turn to God in trusting prayer, asking God for guidance, in a spirit of true nationalism and tolerance during the campaign period and on the day of the election itself.

(THIS IS A SUMMARIZED ARTICLE OF A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE ZAMBIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, ON ZAMBIA'S 2006 TRIPARTITE ELECTIONS.)

CCJDP ACTIVITIES

DECAMPAIGNING?

*M*embers of the CCJDP in Lukulu have been victimized and harassed by some parliamentary candidates contesting for seats in Lukulu constituencies. Such behavior should be condemned in the strongest terms possible. We the CCJDP-Lukulu, would like to state categorically that, we are not a political organization and do not align with any political party. Our aim is not to decampaign any candidate but to educate the electorate on how to vote wisely. We urge all candidates to concentrate on how they are going to develop Lukulu district if elected into power and not on petty issues and personal vendetta.

MISSION STATEMENT

*W*e, the Catholic Commission for Justice Development and Peace of Sancta Maria Parish, and its surrounding outstations, are called by Christ to sensitize, counsel, lobby and enable the community to promote justice and peace.

SERVED BY THE MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE