

**REFLECTION BASED ON THE ELECTION OF
MATTHIAS AS JUDAS ISCARIOT'S REPLACEMENT**

**[SHORT-VERSION OF SERMON RENDERED DURING THE MASS ON THE
14TH OF MAY 2010
AT THE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL]**



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It is not by coincidence that we celebrate the Feast of Matthias during an elective Annual General Meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. No, it is Providence. God wants us to understand some principles and values.

An election means that some people are replaced by others not because they had betrayed some cause like Judas did. No, it is because it is written (i.e. constitutional) that people have to be replaced.

We have to note that though Matthias was elected by casting lots, a prayer had been offered ; “Lord, show us who among these you have appointed for you know the hearts”. So, the power or the mandate of Matthias was not from the lots cast but from the Lord to whom the prayer had been addressed. Your “election” as Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) chair or Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) executive is not the source of your mandate. GOD WHO KNOWS THE HEART IS.

Peter puts a criterion for the person to be elected. He should have been with the disciples right from the beginning at the time of John’s baptism. He must know where this came from and have an experience of this Jesus events. You may have not been there at the time of Jesus nor in the past 2000 years of Christian experience BUT you may and you can share in this experience. How? Delving through the Scriptures especially New Testament whose message is JESUS IS LORD! HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD AND HE IS LOR. It is only then you can be with the Apostles, a witness to the RESSURECTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

The experience and proclamation has been carried through for the past 2000 years. This is the TRADITION (what has been passed on from one generation to the next). It suffices to be well-versed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1995) (or at least iKhathekizima eliKhulu, uSisendleleni kanyekanye no Injabulo yethu ekubeni amaKhatholika). KNOW JESUS WHOSE RESURRECTION YOU PROCLAIM AND KNOW HOW HE HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTIAN AGE, PROCLAIM HIM THEN YOURSELF.

Matthias was elected so that “he may be, with us, a witness to Christ’s resurrection.” You are called to be a witness. You are not the centre, Christ is. Your work, your ministry, your words should be geared towards this goal and proclamation, “JESUS IS LORD! HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD AND HE IS LORD”.

John says, “He must increase and I must decrease”

Peter says, “He may be , WITH US, a witness.” You are not alone in this, don’t be a lone ranger. Hence in the Gospel Jesus says, “My commandment is LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED BY THIS SHALL ALL PEOPLE KNOW YOU ARE MY DISCIPLE IF YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.”