**Reflection at the Holy Eucharist on Saturday, 28 October 2017**

**By The Rt. Rev. Naudal Gomes,**

**Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil,**

**of the Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil**

“But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying.” (Psalm 70)

1. Prayer - Lord our God, our Mother Father, we thank you for the gift of one more day and for being together to adore and praise you, to renew our commitment to you and to receive your strength your blessing. Give us, we pray you, of your Holy Spirit, so that we may follow with consistency and joy, the way of Jesus, with all the people that you have called. By the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our help and deliverer. Amen.

2. Biblical texts illuminate life. In the Old Covenant, the prophet Elisha is called to heal the water of life that was making the earth barren. I see a clear desire from God to make us feel responsible for all sources of life. Everything that was created to give and bring life, is our responsibility, is part of our mission! I remember one of the marks of the Anglican understanding of Mission, "care for the creation of God." Governments make agreements on climate justice, many do not comply and others even back down, as it currently does in Brazil. When natural resources, the source of life, are used improperly, they generate death. How are we proclaiming and witnessing? How are we announcing and denouncing that the interests of the market economy are destroying life? The creation of God needs our help. We are, as the scriptures recalled in the opening celebration, "stewards of Creation." Still in the Old Covenant, the Psalm reminds us that we depend on God and on Him we must raise with confidence, with faith our prayer. "We are poor and needy. Come to our rescue! You are our deliverer! Do not delay, Lord. "

3. In the New Covenant, the Gospel refers us to Jesus, our Savior. He is our model, our leader. To him we must imitate. He, with his example, will point the way that we should follow. It illuminates and inspires our theme of formation for sustainability in the construction of communities and leaderships that are instruments of liberation and autonomy that contribute to make people and communities protagonists and transformers. For him we must look. For me it is "the first love", since our youth we have charmed ourselves with the youth of Nazareth, utopian, radical in solidarity and brotherly love, in compassion, in humility, in the proclamation and living of the Kingdom of God.

Before the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, which is the text for our liturgy today, I want to highlight what Jesus did, as at the end of chapter 9. Jesus 1. Forgive and heal a paralytic; 2. Invites Matthew to be one of his collaborators very close and more, goes to his home, a place of sinners - according to the rules of the society of the time -, lives with them and they, supper with them, celebrate with them; 3. Raise a girl; 4. He went through the towns and villages teaching, announcing the Good News, healing and liberating from all "the demons" who imprison and bring disease and death; - something extraordinary moved him - He, seeing the crowds, had compassion. The people are lost, tired, dejected, "they are like sheep without a shepherd.

In chapter 10, Jesus: 1. He calls, invites, summons people, forms his group of collaborators, including Matthew, the tax collector and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus and his project. Jesus sends - commissions, empowers, trusts; 3. Has a target audience determined "the lost of the house of Israel". At this time it is not the Samaritans or the Gentiles. The tasks are clear: proclamation - the Kingdom of God is near, healing, resurrecting, liberating; 4. Stripping yourself of everything clothed in the power that Jesus gives. 5. Trust in the righteousness of the Kingdom - you will receive what is necessary to eat (the worker is worthy of his salary - you are entitled to daily bread!). And just after the pericope of today, Matthew continues the teaching of Jesus: you will be persecuted but stand fast - persevere - the Holy Spirit will be with you! Be humble, no one is greater than anyone else! Jesus asks his envoys to do what he has already done and experienced. He knows it can be done. He sends them in his name to carry out his mission which is now shared with his disciples.

4. Do we church today, disciples of Jesus, recognize that the Mission is from God? That what we are called to do do in His Name? Do we recognize ourselves empowered to accomplish what Jesus accomplished?

As for formation, my brothers and sisters, my invitation is that we look to Jesus. His example, his words, his teaching. He is our role model. Our master. Our "way, truth and life". At the end of chapter nine Matthew says that what "moves" Jesus, is compassion. I think that in the first place, formation must help us to develop this gift that the Holy Spirit has given us. Compassion moved God, as we can see in Exodus 3, "I have heard the cry of my people," and having compassion comes to set him free. Compassion, developed, strengthened, will move leaders, move the church, move people of good will to see the reality of people and the world and act as instruments of the Good News. It will move people to give what little they have or whatever they have in favor of those who are fragile, vulnerable, without access to any right, without dignity. They suffer violence, discrimination, they go hungry. Who are immigrants, refugees, slaves ....

Formation will help us to have a clear vision so that, out of compassion, following in the footsteps of Jesus, we know how to bring the Good News, especially to our brothers and sisters of the community itself and those who come to it. As well, our neighborhood.

Compassion is the one who makes us perceive the other as our brother and makes us go towards him and, with humility, recognize that our relationship is a two-way street, we share what we have and are and receive from what the other person has and shares with us. Humility will also be one of the qualities of leaders and people on mission. Thus Jesus taught, no one is greater than the other.

The gift of compassion is not easy to live. I have tried to live it in my relationship of welcome and solidarity with people in the street. However, in these ups and downs I have learned a lot from them. They receive solidarity and experience solidarity among them, shared food, blankets. They do not live the culture of accumulation because as the "desert manna", they have no way to store, how to save for another day, for the future. As we accumulate blankets, homes, possessions, they are happy with respectful, welcoming attention, listening and dialogue, and with a blanket and a plate of food today. With a prayer and a blessing today. They teach us a lot and especially become instruments of God's blessing when, coming out, they embrace us and desire the blessing of God. (Refers to the project of work with the people in street situation in the Cathedral of São Tiago, in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil).

Formation must prepare us to act on the path of following Jesus, being an instrument of liberation, healing, social reintegration, re-enchantment with faith and the Kingdom of God, pointing out the path of freedom and the protagonism of each person.

Training should lead us to autonomy and self-sustenance. Freedom and dignity are signs that the kingdom is between us. The formation that leads to sustainability recognizes the responsibility we have with the whole creation of God and that all we have and are are gifts of God that we receive from him by his grace and mercy. So our wealth, which is all people, including the "Matthew" and "Judas Iscariot," our structures, physical spaces, our temples, parish halls, our abilities and talents, will be at the service of the Mission.

Training should contribute to broadening our understanding of how to share more and better our resources for the benefit of all people, especially the most vulnerable.

In the Brazilian context, I wish to say that despite our limitations and difficulties, we have tried to live and witness the faith by building a project according to the teaching of Jesus. Much remains to be done. However, in our formation process, we have grown in service and testimony. In the service, with leadership of the Service of Diaconia and development - SADD, many dioceses and communities have, through their diaconia projects, been instrumental in liberating, autonomous and protagonist. And through the CEA - Center for Anglican Studies acting on behalf of JUNET - National Board of Theological Education, there is theological training for clergymen and lay people that occur in the Areas of the Anglican Province of Brazil, training for the Mission, attending the training project provincial.

In the testimony, we act prophetically in the announcement and denunciation of social, economic, political, cultural and religious reality, seeking the training of clergymen and lay people for public advocacy and for the defense in their communities and neighborhoods of those who suffer violence and discrimination, intolerance and exclusion.

We are happy to be here with you in a spirit of prayer, thanksgiving, and humility, because we want to learn a lot from each other, from sharing, listening and respect. May the Lord of life continue with us and with all of his creation, today and always.

Amen.