



Catholic Archdiocese of Johannesburg

Justice and Peace Statement on Stay Away (7th April 2017)

There seems to be a stigma of challenging and critiquing an elderly person or any hierarchical authority in the African context. This could be due to a cultural background within which the respect of an elderly person or hierarchical authority is instilled in one's mind at a very young age of one's upbringing.

The area of concern with such a stigma is, serious erroneous decisions may certainly be made by an elderly person in the society or by any hierarchical authority, should that happens, how could the society convey a message of concern to any hierarchical authority so that any erroneous decision which cripple the society/country could be reconsidered or rather reversed.

In the political arena, mass protest is one of the means which the society uses to express its grievances to the government. The mass protest in itself as a means of the society voicing its concerns to the government with the expectation of being heard is not a bad gesture. Unfortunately, such a gesture often comes with a pack of a double aged disastrous outcome.

On one hand, the disastrous action may come from the protesting group who may end up showing its anger by burning hospitals, schools and university computer labs. Such a gesture is certainly to be condemned through and through for it brings no human transformation to the society but rather cripples the society from bad to worse. Furthermore, we urge the leaders to refrain from using violent language which insinuate public violence.

On the second hand even if the mass protest is done peacefully, unnecessary shootings which claim the lives of people may follow as the outcome. Such a gesture is also to be equally condemned.

The country is now faced with a very crucial moment whereby Friday the 7th of April South Africa is encouraged to shut down as a means of communicating a serious message to the government. The Catholic Church in Johannesburg (Justice and Peace) urges a peaceful demonstration or stay away whereby people express their concerns to the government without causing any calamitous way which destroys the country's environment, people's lives and property.

The Catholic Justice and Peace Department of Johannesburg urges the South African government that it hears the massive cry and concerns of the people; discern these concerns and ultimately come up with decisions which transform the country.

Issued by Episcopal Vicar of Justice and Peace Department of Archdiocese of Johannesburg

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<http://www.catholicjhb.org.za/departments/justice-and-peace/>