**A Common Vision of the Church**

We need to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance as we define the church's vision for today. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18a). Indeed, without a common vision we move in too many directions and in individualistic ways. This is very different from the Anglican Way as it will not allow us to reach the vision God has set before us as one body. Our unity is the secret of our strength as a church. That is why Jesus prayed, that we should be one (d. John 17:11).

**Clarity of Vision and Mission**

My beloved, the clarity of vision and mission is one of the most motivating factors in our ministries. Without such clarity, we will be lukewarm, unmotivated, and will suffer from spiritual early senility. Without a clear vision and mission we can- not have a strategic plan that involves long-term and short- term goals. Without vision, we also would not have an action plan that helps us to achieve these goals. When we have' a clear vision, mission, and goals, we will be able to assess our progress towards the end of the journey. Once again, I want to stress the importance of prayer and discerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to be able to reach the vision, mission, and goals by which we can achieve the plan of God in our lives as his people.

**Leadership Crisis**

I know that the Church needs many things but I will focus on only a few. The Church today suffers from a leadership crisis. Visionary leaders who lead by example and who are influential are rare in the local and the universal church. Leadership is a gift from God. Many have this gift but don't develop it. In order to develop our gifts, we need to be rooted in Scripture, be men and women of prayer, and be good and faithful stewards in regard to whatever talents God has given us, including time and money. Moreover, we need to remind ourselves that the flocks that have been entrusted to us were purchased by the precious blood of Christ.

**Recovering the right understanding of apostolicity and the catholicity of the Church.**

Many of the problems of the church today are due to lack of understanding of these two important characteristics of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. Many Protestant churches focus on the apostolic teaching but are disassociated from the apostolic traditions which formed the context in which the Scriptures were written and lived out. This creates a gap between these Protestant churches and the traditional churches. **In** the same way, many churches have this very narrow and individualistic vision that detaches them from the universal church and furthermore weakens the influence and mission of the church.

**The Spirit of Giving:**

I thank God that the spirit of giving has started to grow in our diocese. I want to see the churches growing to be self-supporting. I strongly believe that giving helps the congregations to mature spiritually. I also see it as part of our worship. The more the congregation gives, the more they will develop a sense of belonging to the church of Christ. I am not saying this because of the financial crisis within our diocese as I write this. I would say the same if we were well-off.

May the Lord bless us all.

The Most Rev. Dr. Mouneer H. Anis,

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