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## **PASTORAL LETTER OF THE GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE ON THE SEASON OF ADVENT, THE GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE JUBILEE YEAR**

*To the Clergy, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in Ghana and to all People of Good Will.*

### **Greetings of Peace and Joy in Christ,**

As we approach the season of Advent, a time of preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we, the Catholic Bishops of Ghana, write to you with a heart full of hope and expectation. Advent is a time of joyful anticipation, a time when we look forward not only to the coming of Christ at Christmas but also to the final coming of Christ in glory at the end of time. It is a time of renewal, of deepening our faith and of focusing on the hope that we have in Christ, the true light of the world.

This year, as we enter into the season of Advent, we are also mindful of the upcoming general elections and the significance of this moment in the life of our country. The elections are an important occasion for all citizens of Ghana to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities. As we prepare ourselves for this significant event, we are also celebrating a special year in the Church: The Jubilee Year, a year of grace and renewal, which calls us to reflect on our shared faith and our collective journey.

### **Christ, Our Hope in Times of Change**

We recognize that, as a country, Ghana is going through a time of transition, both politically and socially. The political climate in our nation is dynamic, and we are aware of the anxieties and uncertainties that often accompany times of electioneering. In these times, it is easy to lose sight of the hope that sustains us as people of faith. However, as we celebrate Advent, we are reminded that Christ is our ultimate hope, and it is in Him that we find true peace and stability.

The Advent season invites us to open our hearts to the peace that Christ offers, a peace that surpasses all understanding. In the midst of political campaigns, tensions, and divisions, we must remember that Christ came into the world to bring peace, reconciliation and unity. The Gospel teaches us that true peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, love, and mercy in all aspects of our lives. We are called to be instruments of this peace, especially during the electoral process, by promoting dialogue, mutual respect and the common good.

### **The Church as a Beacon of Hope**

As the Church, we are called to be a light in the world, a beacon of hope that guides people towards truth, justice and love. In this Jubilee Year, we are reminded of the importance of renewal in our faith. This renewal is not only personal but communal, as we seek to build a more just, peaceful, and prosperous society. Our faith is not just for the church, but for the world, and it compels us to engage with the issues that affect our society.

We urge all Catholics to engage responsibly in the electoral process, guided by the values of the Gospel. We urge you to participate in the elections not just as voters but also as active citizens who contribute to the common good of the nation. Let us not be swayed by divisive rhetoric or empty promises but seek to promote candidates who will work for the welfare of all, especially the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable. Let us be vigilant in ensuring that the elections are free, fair and peaceful. In all that we do during this electioneering period, let us ensure that we put our dear country Ghana above our political interests and ambitions so that true peace will prevail in Ghana before, during and after the elections.

### **Christ, the Jubilee of Grace**

The Jubilee Year is a time of grace, restoration and a call to conversion (Leviticus 25). It is a time to reflect on God's love and mercy, to heal broken relationships, and to seek reconciliation. This is a year when we are invited to return to God with renewed hearts, to forgive one another and to build bridges of peace. Just as Christ brought about the ultimate Jubilee through His life, death and resurrection, so too are we called to bring the fruits of this Jubilee into our world, particularly in this election year.

As we enter the Advent season, let us not only prepare our hearts for Christmas but also for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the political life of our country. Let this be a time of prayer, reflection and action, where we seek God's guidance in our decisions and pray for our leaders that they may be instruments of His peace and justice.

### **A Call to Prayer and Solidarity**

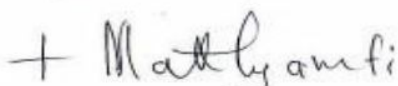
We call upon all Catholics to intensify their prayer during this Advent season, praying for peace, justice and reconciliation in our country. Let us pray for our leaders that they may be guided by wisdom, integrity and a true desire to serve the people. Let us also pray for all citizens of Ghana that we may be united in our diversity, working together for the common good.

In the spirit of Advent, we also encourage acts of charity and service to those in need. This is a time to show love and compassion to the poor, the sick, the oppressed, and the marginalized. Let us embody the hope of Christ by bringing light to the dark places of our society.

### **Conclusion**

In this season of Advent, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, let us remember that He is our hope, both for the Church and for the nation Ghana. Christ is the one who brings light into our darkness, and in Him we find the strength to face the challenges of our time with courage and faith. As we enter into this time of political transition, let us be agents of peace, justice and reconciliation. Let us work together to build a nation where love, unity and justice reign.

May the peace of Christ, which the world cannot give, fill our hearts and our homes this Advent season, and may His grace guide us through the coming year.



**MOST REV. MATTHEW KWASI GYAMFI**  
CATHOLIC BISHOP OF SUNYANI & PRESIDENT,  
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**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2024**