



## Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference

30 January 2018

### To International Catholic Engaged Encounter Leadership

Greetings from the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) that is gathering for its annual Plenary Session in Pretoria from the 23 – 31 January 2018.

We would like to sincerely extend our gratitude to the International Catholic Engaged Encounter that has its footprint on our shores within our SACBC territory. CEE has arrived in our region way back in 1981 and it has since grown into various dioceses. We thank you once more for the warm hospitality that you showed in September 2017 in Lima, Peru during the triennial conference of ICEE. The SACBC Liaison Bishop to the Marriage and Family Office was delighted to hear of the report on ICEE experience of Lima.

In its Plenary Session in Gaborone, Botswana in August 2016, during the study day on *Amoris Laetitia*, the SACBC had already acknowledged the rich history of CEE and its work within our territory. The Conference has also resolved to mandate the Catholic Engaged Encounter to be a principal pastoral agent for the Conference in the ministry of the marriage preparation within the Department of the Laity and the Office of Marriage and Family.

The Conference did mandate the Liaison Bishop of the Office of Marriage and Family to create a working platform for all the movements in the church which work within an ambit of Marriage and Family. We have since been meeting with all the movements every year. I am glad to say that CEE has been active in this initiative.

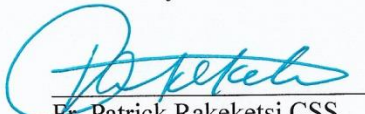
I must mention that the Conference is subsidising some of the initiatives of CEE within our territory as a gesture of appreciation and giving some courage for the greater outreach in all the dioceses.

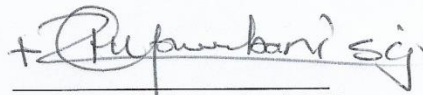
As Pope Francis has encouraged Christian communities in *Amoris Laetitia*, to recognise marriage preparation as vitally important in the pastoral care of marriage and family (AL 207); we would wish that many other Episcopal Conferences endorse the activities of Catholic Engaged Encounter within their territories.

We, in the SACBC region, are spreading CEE to the far ends of our three countries; South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland.

In conclusion, I would encourage the whole community of ICEE to work hard to take care of marriages by preparing them well.

God bless you all,

  
Fr. Patrick Rakeketsi CSS  
Associate Secretary General  
CEE National Coordinator

  
Bishop Zolile Mpambani SCJ  
Liaison Bishop to SACBC  
Office of Marriage and Family