

Foreword: From Root to Branch

Dear People of God of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa

All of us remember the parable of the sower, and how the seed that fell in good soil developed strong deep roots, and grew strong, and bore a great harvest (Mark 4:8). But it also takes hard work to maintain good soil and raise a healthy crop.

We also remember Jesus' words that he is the true vine, and we are the branches, and that we must abide in him if we are to bear much fruit (John 15:5). Such abiding also takes dedicated perseverance.

God's desires that all his people should be flourishing seeds that bring a rich harvest, and strong and fruitful branches. He will always help us strive towards this goal.

Therefore I wholeheartedly commend to you these Studies *From Root to Branch*, confident that God will bless us as we use them to help us grow in the life to which God calls us.

The studies contribute to our prioritising of Theological Education during 2013. Our aim is to affirm and consolidate the central role it plays within the Province, for it is at the heart of our fundamental strategy of ensuring both ordained and lay leaders are equipped for guiding, directing, and encouraging the life of ACSA and its members, in our ministry within our parishes and in our mission to God's world at every level.

More than this, I am sure you will enjoy following these carefully constructed studies – and also using the special liturgy created for Theological Education Sunday on 18 August. Reading them, I have found my own heart and mind stirred to appreciate in new ways how much God does for us, not only in calling us to faith, but in leading us forward through all the adventures of life, as we respond to Jesus' call 'Follow me!'

So may God give us all great joy and encouragement, within the family of his people, as we consider how we may further grow, in root and branch, and so bear fruit in service of the lives of others, and of the world around.

Yours in the service of Christ

+Thabo Cape Town