

Port-au-Prince, June 6, 2018

TO: [REDACTED]

Subject: Contestation of the election held at Belval, Leogane, June 2, 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

This letter is to contest the results of the election held in Belval on June 2, 2018, in accordance with the canons of the Episcopal Church, Title III.11.8 and to highlight the various irregularities that have occurred, from the 1st notice of convocation of the specially called convention of the 121st Convention of the Episcopal Church of Haiti until the closing of the session of June 2, 2018.

Since the signing of the Covenant by the Primate of the Episcopal Church, The Most Rev. Michael Curry, the Bishop of the Diocese of Haiti, the Rt. Rev. Jean Zaché Duracin, and the Rt. Rev. Ogé Beauvoir, then Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of Haiti, it is clear that the diocese has been in total chaos: refusal to recognize that the diocese is in crisis and to work on a process of reconciliation (violation of the covenant), manipulation of ordinations to inflate the number of clergy and create a majority in favor of a candidate, elimination of all candidates likely to question the management and morality of the current administration, canonical violations, plotting to commit fraud, irregularities in the selection process of delegates, systematic refusal to take into account the objections of clergy and laity wanting to place the diocese on the right path, intimidation of people who openly expressed their disagreement with the actions of the Bishop, bribes or tentative to bribe lay delegates and finally, the election of a candidate whose moral and ethical character must be questioned, if he has allowed himself to be used in such a masquerade.

All these elements lead us, both lay delegates and clergy, who participated in the last round of voting on June 2, 2018 and whose signatures are below, to contest the result and demand that this election be declared null and void. Our Christian and moral consciences dictate to us this duty from which we cannot escape. Here are some details for your edification:

- I. **Covenant violation**: Should we talk about it? Since he signed the Covenant, the Bishop of the Diocese has felt empowered. Strengthened in his position, he has multiplied the measures to punish some and destabilize others. Supported by his gang, he did not attempt any reunification, pacification, or reconciliation. While admitting his wrongdoings abroad, it is a belligerent and vindictive bishop who has developed a strategy for an electoral coup d'état that exceeds what is done in secular politics.
- II. **Manipulation of ordinations**: In July 2016, the Bishop of the Diocese ordained four deacons to the priesthood. Having received no hostile reaction to this action, he hastened to ordain thirty-five candidates to the Holy Orders: seventeen transitional deacons, eighteen vocational deacons (called permanent deacons in Haiti), without any provision from the local canons regulating the ministry of (permanent) vocational deacons. He did that with the sole aim of influencing the election results. Here are the statistics that allowed Rev. Kerwin Delicat to win the election:
 - a. Clergy members as of November 12, 2017: **61**

- b. Number of Deacons ordained since November 2017: **35**
 - c. Members of clergy as of May 2, 2018: **96**
 - d. Number of clergy attending the Convention: **87** (The Ordinary took care of eliminating the retired clergy, the clergy on leave, such as Rev. Margarete Dimanche and Rev. Sonner Alexandre, who did not attend the synod knowing they were already disqualified to vote.)
 - e. Number of Void Voting Ballots/Blank: **24**
 - f. Number of Voting Ballots for other candidates: **12**
 - g. Number of ballots cast in favor of the elected candidate: **51**
- III. **A slate of candidates without legitimacy**: The systematic elimination of candidates not belonging to his clan, guaranteed victory to the Bishop of the Diocese, no matter who was elected. The three candidates selected by his permanent council would all obviously guaranty the continuity of the current administration, all corrupt, opposed to any reform or change. One of them, The Rev. Samuel St. Louis, without even rescinding his candidacy, did not consider it necessary to vote for himself, even in the first round of May 17.
- IV. **Canonical Violations**
- a. **The notice of convocation in violation of Title I, Canon I, Sections 1 & 2.** The notice of meeting issued by the Secretary of the Convention, dated April 24, 2018, deprived some people of their right to vote but authorized others, who were illegitimate voters, to vote, in defiance of the canons. Is it normal for a notice of convocation to amend a canon? This unilateral and arbitrary amendment of the canons had the effect of harming delegates who did not even attend the electoral synod. However, the canons recognize the right to vote for canonically resident bishops of the diocese, canonically resident active priests and deacons, retired priests of the diocese, members of religious orders approved by the Bishop and assigned to a ministry, lay delegates of missions and parishes, delegates representing the various diocesan associations and the Theological Seminary, the Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor and Treasurer of the Convention.
 - b. **Bishop Duracin authorized the illegal vote of a priest canonically resident in the Diocese of Southeast Florida.** Indeed, the Reverend Pierre Simpson Gabaud, canonically resident priest in the Diocese of Southeast Florida, voted in the elections of May 17 and June 2, 2018 in violation of Title I, Canon I, Section 2b of the Diocesan Canons. This violation has been brought to the attention of the President of the Synod and the Standing Committee since May 17, but Father Gabaud was authorized to vote in both (2) synods. See <https://www.ecdplus.org/clergies/9870127243>
 - c. **The Diocesan Bishop and the Secretary of Convention unilaterally disqualified lay delegates.**

The Diocesan Bishop and the Secretary of the Convention revoked the right to vote of delegates Woodsby Cold Moise & Anosse Derival, representing the missions of St.Andre(Casale) and St-Esprit(Lascahobas), in violation of Title I, Canon I, section 1 e (composition of the Convention), section 2 d (members of the Convention with voting rights). Since these two delegates were excluded without any justification given to them during the Convention the organized missions, wishing at all costs to exercise their right to vote, were represented at the Convention of June 2

by their alternate delegates to whom the Secretary of the Convention refused to hand over the badges guaranteeing them access to the voting room. He told them categorically that "the bishop has decided that these missions do not vote." These delegates were turned away by the uniformed armed police who controlled the door leading to the meeting room. Nowhere is it said in the canons that the Secretary of the Convention and the Diocesan Bishop can consult and decide to exclude or disqualify the missions. They did it because the delegates of these missions did not support their candidate.

- d. Electoral Regulations in violation of canons: Chapter IV (section 12) of the bylaws governing the electoral process – dealing with the electors - is not in accordance with the canons (Title I, Canon I, Section 1).
- e. Delegates participated and voted illegally at the convention of June 2, 2018 with the blessing of the President of the Convention. The Station St. Philippe & St. Jacques, located in Petite-Rivière de Baignet, was represented by Mr. Vilmé Pierre Evens who voted in the election in violation of local canons that recognize this right only to organized Missions and Parishes. This canonical violation was raised during the Convention and the President of the Convention and the Standing Committee remained indifferent, doing nothing to respect and enforce the canons. In addition, Holy Trinity Cathedral, whose Priest in Charge was elected Coadjutor Bishop, was represented by three (3) delegates, in violation of the canons which recognize for each organized mission the right to have one (1) delegate. Some speakers referred to the case of the November 2011 electoral Convention as a case of jurisprudence where the Cathedral had only one delegate, but the obsession to elect their candidate went beyond the canonical obligation of the President of the Convention and the Standing Committee to respect and apply the canons. The diocesan associations (Youth, Men, and Ladies) were each represented by 3 delegates to the two electoral Conventions in violation of the canons. All these violations were raised in the Conventions and ignored by the president of the assembly and the Standing Committee who, presumably, agreed to violate the canons, because they remained indifferent to all canonical violations raised during the Convention.
- f. Change of delegates between the two electoral convention (Title I violation, Canon I, Section 3 b). Article 13 of the bylaws governing the election process of the Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese refers to the election or appointment of a delegate to take part in the electoral Convention. Since the electoral Convention is a specially called Convention, the same delegates who attended the regular Convention should attend the electoral Convention. However, some delegates were changed including, among others, the lay delegate of St. Simeon in Croix-des-Bouquets, Mr. Jean Robert Dort was replaced by Mr. Bazelais Polynice and the lay delegate of St. Marguerite (La Tournelle), Mr. Maurice Cadet was replaced by Mr. Ulysse Clifford while the original delegates were not unavailable.

V. Planned fraud:

- a. 2 kilometers separated the place where badges were distributed and the place of the Convention. The place where the Convention was held and the place where the badges were delivered are separated by about 2 kilometers. Some delegates

had to go back and forth between the location of the distribution of badges and the venue of the Convention. Systematically, the Secretary of the Convention kept the badges of the delegates who were suspected of not belonging to the fan club of his candidate. As soon as a delegate was told that his badge was in the hands of the Secretary, he had to leave the venue of the Convention, whose gate was guarded by the police, who were instructed to only let delegates with badges pass, then walk 2 kilometers in order to get his badge from the Secretary. Examples of that are the case of Mr. Edzer Jean-Louis (Ascension, Thorlande), Mr. Romel Joseph (Diocesan Association of Men), Mr. Junior Pierreville (St. Croix, Taifer) and Mr. Céder Nelson (Bonne Nouvelle, Bigonet) to whom the secretary refused to hand over the badges to gain access to the Convention because these delegates would not vote for the official candidate.

- b. **Hostility towards delegates who did not support the official candidate.** All delegates could spend the night on the campus of the Faculty of Nursing Sciences in Leogane. However, delegates suspected of not supporting the official candidate were transferred elsewhere and left without food. Among others, François Cléon (Christ the King, Terrier-Rouge), Bazalais St. Jean (St. Martin of Tours, Delmas), Laurent Guerson and Romel Joseph (Diocesan Association of Men), were turned away from the campus.
- c. **Intimidation by armed police in convention Hall.** For the first time in the history of the Diocese of Haiti, we saw the Secretary of the Convention and the President of the transition committee inviting armed police into the room of a synod in order to search the participants and intimidate them. Not only was the campus of the Faculty of Nursing Sciences in Leogane (FSIL) heavily occupied by police officers carrying pistols and automatic weapons, but these armed police officers were in all the corridors of the building.
- d. **Altercations between delegates, police and security agents.** The altercations between lay and clerical delegates on one side and the police on the other side exasperated more than one person. It is in this context that Father Wilky Avril was admonished during the synod because he dared to speak about the irregularities. Since then, this priest has been traumatized by the attitude of diocesan leaders towards him. His only sin was to denounce the actions which are incompatible with the normal process for a credible, transparent and impartial election.
- e. **Intimidation by summoning clergy to the office of the Bishop.** On May 23 and 30, 2018, 8 clergymen who had intervened during the Convention of May 17, 2018 were summoned for questioning to the office of the Bishop, who was assisted by his chancellors and the Canon to the Ordinary, the Rev. Joseph Frantz Casseus. During these meetings, strong pressure was exerted on them to silence them, thus limiting their intervention at the Convention of June 2.
- f. **Attempt to have the minutes signed before the election.** The Convention office instructed the members of the Convention to sign the minutes of the election even before the vote. It was a clear desire to endorse the result by all delegates despite the canonical violations and irregularities that surrounded the process.

- g. **Father Roldano Auguste confirmed the planning of fraud.** Father Roldano Auguste, Priest-in-Charge of the missions Ascension and Ste. Croix, questioned on Sunday, June 3, 2018 by his vestry about canonical violations of the rights of mission lay delegates to participate in the Convention, answered that he saw Reverend Sonley hide the badges of some delegates. Father Roldano told him that it is not right to exclude legitimate mission lay delegates. However, Reverend Sonley told him that it was already planned, and that this decision will not be changed; the mission lay delegates will not be allowed to participate and vote at the Convention because their vote would be unfavorable to the official candidate. We have a voice recording of this meeting and the members of the vestry can testify to this effect.
 - h. **Attempted bribe and corruption.** Reverend Deacon Ricot Geffrard, Deputy Secretary of the convention, attempted to bribe Mr. Leones Stimpfil, delegate of St. Aidan, in exchange for his vote in favor of the official candidate.
 - i. **Bishop Duracin influenced the electoral process.** Article 9 of the Covenant - signed by the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, the Diocesan Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Duracin, diocesan bishop, and the Rt. Rev. Beauvoir, then Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese – called upon the Rt. Rev. Duracin to abide by the policies of the Episcopal Church and the duty of the Diocesan Bishop to abstain from the electoral process. However, he did interfere with the process by meeting regularly with the Standing and Transition Committees, whose last meeting was on May 30, 2018. The Rt. Rev. Duracin did influence the process. That is why he was indifferent to all points of law raised during the two electoral synods. The chairman of the Standing Committee, who was previously chairman of the selection / nomination committee that drafted the rules governing the election process of the coadjutor bishop of the diocese, failed to apply or enforce the said regulations. Some interveners requested the application of these bylaws before the vote; the Chair of the Standing Committee ironically called the meeting to vote without respect for these bylaws and said those who do not agree could go into dispute. This reflects his deliberate decision to not respect the regulations that he himself established. The Diocesan Bishop who presided over the Convention did exactly what the Chairman of the Standing Committee said, asking the transitional committee to open the vote. This demonstrates that the Diocesan Bishop and the Chair of the Standing Committee have agreed not to follow the rules.
- VI. **Irregularities VS bylaws governing the election process of the Coadjutor Bishop.** Article 17 of the bylaws stipulates: "To exercise his right to vote, any lay delegate must be provided with his mandate duly signed by the priest in charge of his parish/mission and the certificate of regular payment of the pledge issued by his parish." Rev. Wildaine Andre, Rev. Wilky Avril, Rev. Irnel Duveaux and the Rt. Rev. Ogé Beauvoir asked that these rules be respected at the time of the vote. Again, the President of the Convention deliberately chose to ignore these interventions and to bypass these regulations drafted by his selection/appointment committee and approved by his Standing Committee.
- VII. **Moral & Ethical character of the elected candidate.** In a letter dated October 17, 2017 to the Standing Committee, Ms. Guerline Charles, then engaged to the Reverend Mardoché

VIL, described a scene in which she was beaten, tortured and humiliated by Father Vil who put pressure on her to abort the child of his that she was carrying. All this in the presence of Rev. Kerwin Délicat and Rev. Fritz Désiré, who did nothing to rescue her or to denounce the torture inflicted on her by their colleague. Here is an excerpt from the letter from Guerline Charles: "... seeing me arrive at the presbytery, the Reverend fathers Kerwin Délicat and Fritz Désiré warned their colleague Vil who was about to hit me in the head, face and everywhere ... despite my cries for help, they did nothing to help me ... I understood then that it was an ambush ... ". How can a priest who has witnessed such brutality against a young lady without rescuing her, or even denouncing the abuser, be a pastor for the women of the diocese and for the church in general is an important consideration? Moreover, Guerline said in her letter: "a bishop is the first pastor of the diocese, he/she must have a moral character". We rely on this very fact to say that the elected candidate does not fulfill the ethical and moral conditions to be a bishop. We did not mention the rumors of embezzlement at Sainte Croix parish of Léogâne or St. Paul in Montrouis. But the case presented by Guerline Charles is relevant and verifiable. How can a pastor be unmoved by the physical abuse of a young woman? This makes him an accomplice; his silence automatically disqualifies him to be selected as a candidate to the episcopate.

We must be consistent. If candidate Jean Madoche Vil was expelled from the election process because of the case of ill-treatment inflicted to Ms. Guerline Charles, how to accept that the candidate Kerwin Delicat, accomplice and witness of these abuses be elected bishop? It is exactly the letter written by Ms. Guerline Charles which was at the basis of the rejection of Father Vil's candidacy. Yet the silence is total on the attitude of his witnesses / accomplices Delicat and Désiré mentioned in Ms. Charles' letter. "Gen vòlè paske gen reselè." (impunity promotes corruption). The silent witness is as guilty as the criminal.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled underfoot. " (Matthew 5, 13).

For years, the Permanent Committee and the Diocesan Office have protected Father Amirolde Lazard, who was sentenced in absentia for rape and forced abortion on a 15-year-old girl by the court in Miragoane. It was not until August 2017 that the parishioners of St. Paul parish, Montrouis, managed to drive him out from the altar, against the will of the Diocesan Bishop who wanted to impose this priest as their pastor.

The frauds, intimidations, canonical violations and irregularities of all kinds used to endow the diocese with another bishop who will continue to protect the abusers of girls and women in the Haitian society, are incompatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We live in a country where the level of corruption and the corruption index are among the highest in the world. However, the Church and her ministers must be above all suspicion. We should have been the salt of Haitian society. Unfortunately, the fraudulent episcopal election of June 2, 2018 only takes our church away from its mission in a society ruined by corruption and impunity.

Taking into account all these canonical violations, planned frauds, irregularities and the moral/ethical character of the elected candidate, we, members of the 121st Synod, eager to see a change in the diocese and representing more than 20% of the laity and clergy who participated in the last vote and whose signatures follow, contest the results of this fraudulent election held

on June 2, 2018 at the Faculty of Nursing Sciences of Léogâne (FSIL) and ask it to be declared null and void. It will be justice for the Episcopal Church of Haiti. It will be justice for Haiti.

Follow the signatures:

Massillon Clibert

Massillon Clibert
St. Matthieu

Ange Ernst

Ange Ernst
Ascension

Lapointe Gabriel

Lapointe Joseph Gabriel
Epiphanie

Léonès Stimpil

Stimpil Léonès
St. Aidan

Weswood Valcin

Valcin Weswood
Sts. Innocents

Jn Robert Azulphar

Azulphar Jn Robert
St. Barthelemy

Antoine Marie Michelène

Antoine Maire Michelène
Sainte Croix

Lucie Merzier

Lucie Merzier
St. Marc

Esterlin Mm Gabriel

Esterlin Mme Gabriel
St. André

Pavrette Antoine

Pavrette Antonine
St. Luc

Ricardo Joseph

Joseph Ricardo
St. Etienne

ALBERT Jean Goetchine

Albert Jean Goetchine
St. Michel

Lukene CESAR

Cesar Lukene
Resurrection

Pierre Emile Menelas

Menelas P. Emile
Bon Samaritain

Joseph Jn Winal

Joseph Jn Winal
St. Thomas

Charles Roberne

Charles Roberne
St. Basile Le Grand

Fausner Thelcy

Thelcy Fausner
St. Jacques

Jean Maccène

Jean Maccène
St. Michel

Henrilus Lanique

Henrilus Lanique
St. Jean l'Évangéliste

Polinice Jn Willy

Polinice Jn Willy
Christ-Roi

Dorcilien Decius

Dorcilien Decius
Notre-Dame

Charles Luck

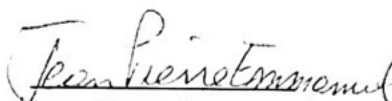
Charles Luck
St. Barnabas

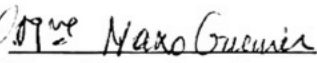
Jean Cindy


Jean Cindy
Christ-Roi

Jeune David

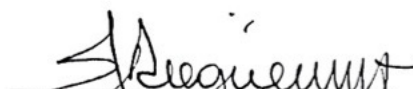
Jeune David
St. Marc


Jean Pierre Emmanuel
St. Luc

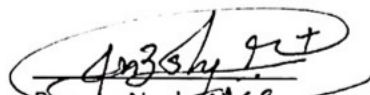

Mme Maxo Guerrier
St. Simon & St. Jude


Revde. Marie Carmel Chery
Epiphanie

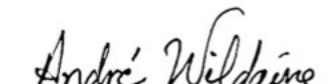

Rev. Jonas Beauvoir
Christ-Roi


Rev. Joseph Tandel Diegue
St. Basile Le Grand

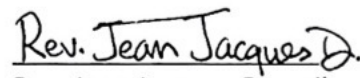

Rev. Michel M. Guerrier
St. Luc

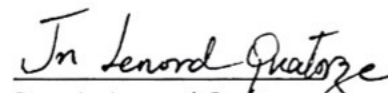

Rev. Jn Nesly
St. Michel

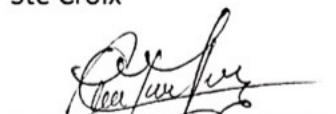

Rev. Colbert Estil
La Résurrection


Rev. Wildaine André
Bon Samaritain


Rev. Imel Duveaux
Ste Croix

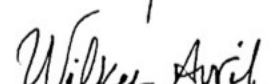

Rev. Jean Jacques Deravil
St. Esprit



Rev. Jn Lenord Quatorze
St. Marc



Rev. Joël Gourssé Celestin
St. Marc


Rev. Frédéric Ménélas
St. Mathias


Rev. Jn Milor Medela
St. Etienne


Rev. Wilky Avril
Sts. Innocents


Rev. Walin Decamps
St Sacrement


Rev. Jean-Joël Racine
Retraité

Attachments

- Notice of Meeting from the Synod Office dated April 24, 2018
- Copy of the bylaws governing the electoral process (French & English versions)
- E-mail from the Secretary of the Synod to Reverend Samuel Louis-Charles and Jean-Jacques Déravil excluding delegates from St. Andre and St. Esprit missions.
- Pictures of the Reverend Pierre Simpson Gabaud voting June 2 at the FSIL
- Ms. Guerline Charles's letter to the Standing Committee dated Oct. 17, 2017 (kreyol & English)
- Pictures of the Police within the venue of the electoral synod receiving orders from the Secretary of the Synod and the chair of transition committee.