

14 December 2011

**Catholic Church Celebrates Police Day**  
**on 29 January 2012**

**Unite in prayer against crime and corruption in South Africa.**

To all Parish Priests and Parish Councils

Dear Father, Dear Friends,

We all know that crime and corruption in South Africa has become a threat to our society. The rate of homicide, rape, domestic violence and assault, kidnapping, robbery, hijacking and child molestation among others is far above those of comparable countries. Dealing with crime is not as easy as arresting the perpetrators; it is a task involving a sustained multi-pronged approach that involves each and every citizen. With that in mind the Justice and Peace Department in July 2011 organised a roundtable discussion that brought together civil society, church, government and SAPS to discuss how to tackle the causes of crime. The discussion acknowledged that the Church needs to be much more involved and proactive in the fight against crime.

Therefore, in agreement with the bishops on the SACBC Admin Board, the J&P department encourages all parishes to **commemorate Police Day on Sunday 29 January 2012**, by celebrating it together with the South Africa Police Service (SAPS). Each parish is urged to invite police officers from the local police station (especially Catholic police officers) to come to church and to speak at the end of the Mass about efforts to tackle crime and its causes. The purpose of this initiative is:

1. To raise awareness of the causes and effects of crime in society and the church.
2. To encourage the involvement of the church and communities in the fight against crime.
3. To affirm the work that many police are doing, putting their lives at risk to keep the streets safe.
4. To create a better relationship and collaboration between the Church and the police in fighting crime so as to be able to hold the SAPS accountable and to reduce the level of corruption.

We invite all parishes and dioceses to participate in this event, so that, together, we can express our support for the work being done by the SAPS and for the fight against crime. Let us pray for an end to crime; work towards building a just and peaceful South Africa that we can all be proud of.

Resource material will be sent to you in early January 2012. Meanwhile, please start thinking creatively about how you can celebrate this Police Day. Afterwards we will be very happy to receive information of any actions that you have been able to do on that day.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



Fr Mike Deeb OP  
Coordinator  
SACBC Justice and Peace Department