



Holy Trinity Hillcrest

News Letter September 2015

Time for Compassion

Dear God's people,

In our last magazine we printed a financial statement that reflected a very minute portion of our budget directed to social responsibility. In fact the amount reflected is extremely embarrassing. But thankfully that is not the true story. In this edition we will reflect a more realistic amount of the parish's contribution to people and organisations in need. Our theme for this month is on our ministry of Compassion. Nalane Walker very kindly researched and produced the following article. Our thanks to her.

Compassion (noun) is defined as a sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. It is synonymous with pity, sympathy, empathy, understanding, care, concern, solitude, sensitivity, tender-heartedness, warmth, love, mercy, leniency, tolerance, consideration, kindness, humanity, charity, benevolence, sorrow and grief. Compassion is also a human disposition that fuels acts of kindness and mercy and it has been said that 'Compassion will cure more sins than condemnation'.

Many scientists believe that compassion may even be vital to the survival of our species. Compassionate action, such as giving to charity, activates pleasure circuits in the brain and happiness. Apparently, being compassionate - tuning in to other people in a kind and loving manner - can reduce risk of heart disease by boosting the positive effects of the Vagus Nerve, which helps to slow our heart rate.

Emotion researchers say compassion helps make caring parents and caregivers. Compassion helps make better spouses because compassionate people are more optimistic and supportive when communicating with others.

Compassion makes us better friends because we offer emotional support

and satisfaction that grow relationships. Feeling

compassion for a person makes us less vindictive toward others contributing to healthy interpersonal relations.

Employees who receive more compassion in their workplace feel positive and contentment, and are more committed to their jobs. More compassionate societies—those that take care of their most vulnerable members, assist other nations in need, and have children who perform more acts of kindness—are the happier ones.

So how do we attain this state of compassionate living, more so as Christians in a world besotted with entitlement and where you don't give with receiving something in return. How can we overcome temptation to subdue this God-given quality of mind and character and obeying our Creator as he commanded us do.

Our Biblical Foundation

Dr. Peggy Jo Wobbema points us to the Bible for answers about why we bear the responsibility of carrying the cross of compassion.

She reminds us that compassion is part of God's divine nature and His mercy is an intrinsic quality. She writes,

'Compassion is a word of action. It is not observing from the sidelines; it is the heartfelt care for another with both the intent and action. It exemplifies the character of God in who He is and how He responds to His children.'

'Despite the fallenness of the human race, God consistently demonstrates that He is both a God of judgment and a God of mercy,' she says. This concept of loving kindness reverberates throughout Biblical history. 'God leads, guides, provides for, and protects His people — all based on His love. Christ demonstrates fully the compassion and steadfast love of God. Because compassion is the character of God, the prophets declare that the same is required of

the people of God (Micah 6:8).

'Jesus' model of ministry focused on God's concern for the physical, social, and spiritual needs of others. Through the demonstration of His life, Jesus calls the people of God to practice love, kindness, compassion, and servanthood toward those they encounter on a daily basis. The uniqueness of Jesus' ministry rests in His concern for persons - He truly loves people and considers them worthy of respect and compassion because of what they are - bearers of the divine image of God.'

Nevertheless, the message is clear: 'One cannot love God and not love those whom God loves. And the converse is also true. An individual cannot love his neighbour with divine quality without loving God deeply. Without question, loving God is basic. Love for God is the foundation for loving one's neighbour. Love for God and love for humankind must support and pervade one another.'

Wobbema says that for Jesus, the concepts of love and neighbour are as broad as human need; He set no limit on love or compassion and the Church (the people of God) is to be the conduit through which people experience the steadfast love and compassion of God.

How to cultivate compassion

1. Change your heart

The organization, Seed of Compassion, offers these suggestions for cultivating compassion. It says instead of recognising the differences between yourself and others, try to recognise what you have in common. One of the best exercises comes from an article from Ode Magazine — it's a five-step exercise to try when you meet friends and strangers. Do it discreetly and try to do all the steps with the same person. With your attention geared to the other person, tell yourself:

Step 1: 'Just like me, this person is



seeking happiness in his/her life.'

Step 2: 'Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in his/her life.'

Step 3: 'Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair.'

Step 4: 'Just like me, this person is seeking to fill his/her needs.'

Step 5: 'Just like me, this person is learning about life.'

2. Learn by turning to the Word

We can learn about compassion through examples recorded in the Word of God. Imitating God and/or Christ has led many to lead exemplary compassionate lives. To do this we need to commit ourselves, practice forgiveness for ourselves and others and build relationships by leaning on the countless times God has forgiven humankind.

Building relationships and drawing others to Christ is evidence of the Church in action. Towner says this is taken up in 1 Peter 2:10: 'Once you were not a people; but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.'

'Applied with special emphasis to the Gentile believers to remind them of their undeserved blessings, the fact holds equally true for Christians today: people come into relationship with God only because God shows mercy to them.

Similarly, he says in the New Testament writers echo the Old Testament belief that mercy belongs to God (2 Cor 1:3; James 5:11) and that this resource of mercy is inexhaustible (Eph 2:4). For this reason, people can confidently cry out to God for mercy in time of need. Mercy thus forgives and liberates. It is also shown to

those who show mercy in kind to others.

3. Practice when we are in need of compassion

Karen Armstrong in her book, *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, says that while we may feel embarrassed by the triviality of our own suffering compared to suffering we see in the world, it is still real to us. Don't discount it.

'Make a deliberate effort to inhabit those moments fully and send a message of encouragement and sympathy to your former self. The object of this exercise is not to leave you wallowing in self-pity. The vivid memory of painful times past is a reservoir on which you can draw.'

Burgess who is using the *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* to practice says ironically, the more we treat ourselves like we would treat others, the less focused we become on ourselves, transcending our self-obsession that causes us (and others) unnecessary pain. Practice on yourself. Be compassionate to you; it will help you be more compassionate to others.

Commit to be compassionate

During this Month of Compassion let us pray that many more of the marginalised and poor will experience the joy of the Gospel and the genuine compassion of the followers of Christ.

At times we may want to walk away from situations in which we have the power to make a difference; we can close off our sympathy and our sense of solidarity. But the example of the Gospel always points us in the way of fullness, generosity of response and compassion.

Let us ask our Lord God for the generosity of heart in all the situations we meet and for sensitivity to the needs of ourselves and those around us in all the human connections we make each day (the neighbours who share the air we breathe).

As you go about your daily tasks, ask God to give you a spirit of compassion for the widows, the orphans, the prisoners, those who are terminally ill, those who are jobless, for that blind, for the beggars, homeless and addicts. Ask God for the grace to somehow enter in to that persons life, imagine their hurt and humiliation.

Ask for the grace to emotionally enter your husband, your wife, your children and your aging parents. We need to try to live in their world and walk in their shoes in order to know how to extend mercy and compassion.

When people cross your path, if possible, stop and look at them. Having stopped, speak to them. Having spoken, listen compassionately to what their real needs are. If possible, let your life touch their life with Jesus.

As we observe the Month of Compassion, let us remember the acts and of love and mercy enacted by the Son of God and strive and commit ourselves to honouring God for His great mercies in our lives by growing His Kingdom.



Is this us?

Do we measure up to our Mission Statement?

As a Parish we set our eyes on expressing our understanding of the love of God to those in search of God's love. In addition to speaking of that love we have an extensive programme of providing for individuals and organizations in ways that we pray would reflect God's love for them.

Through funds held in our central fund, fund raising activities of the various ministry groups and from donations we receive locally or internationally we assist students with

Parish Mission Statement.

To share our love for Christ in response to the need for God, through ministering to each other and surrounding communities.

bursaries, or basic support, food, winter clothing and grants to various organizations. Following is a breakdown of our commitment to those in need:

We presently provide monthly food parcels to '29' families. Some parishioners donate a monthly contribution to the Food Fund. Since January we spent R40 173 in providing for the hungry.

We have assisted four students with bursaries. One reading theology, another studying B A Education and the third completing a BSoc. R13 560.00 has been donated this far. One student is supervised by the Hillcrest Advice Bureau to who we donated a further R6000.00, and another R990.00 for another student.

After a special appeal with attacks on foreigners Holy Trinity donated R 6750.00 to the Red Cross for assisting the displaced people.

The EWG distributed R 6000 to various organizations including coordinating the Jersey project for toddlers at the Shongweni Creche.

The Morning Women's Guild donated R7500.00 thus far this year. They support a student with rent money, donated cash to the Hillcrest Aids centre, and facilitated the jersey, tracksuit pants and beanie project for 1000 hills Charity.

More than half of our monthly assessment paid to the Diocese is intended to assist parishes that are not able to fund their own priest. By the end of August we have paid R185 460.00.

I think you will all agree we certainly live up to our Mission Statement. We give thanks to God for his abundance of blessings which we are able to share.

**That's what I consider true generosity:
You give your all, and yet you always feel
as if it costs you nothing." Simone du Beauvoir**



**It is possible to give without loving,
but it is impossible to love without giving.**
Richard Braunstein

Helping Hands Healing Hearts.
Thank you Holy Trinity.



The Outdoor Service hosted by our Environment Group at Springside Nature conservancy was yet again a resounding success. Although the weather wasn't at it's best the early morning drizzle held off long enough for us to have the service outdoors and take in the beauty of God's creation. Approximately 64 braved the weather to worship our Creator.



Outdoor Service

23 August 2015



Festival of Celebration



AUTUMN

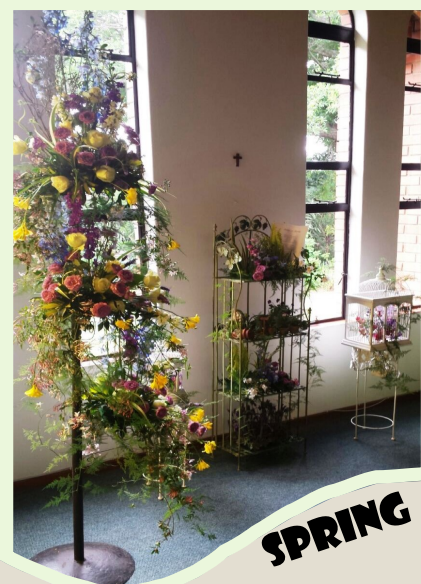
There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: Ecc. 3¹

All those who attended the Festival of Celebration would have been blessed in some way by the absolute splendour and beauty which filled Holy Trinity.

We give thanks to God for talents, gifts and generosity. The Harvest was abundant! The food collected was shared between the Aids Centre, Fulton School, Zikwale House of Hope and Shaya Moyo Creche. The fruit was donated to the Hillcrest Provincial Hospital.



SUMMER



SPRING



WINTER

BITS AND PIECES!

SEPTEMBER

01-Ann Gibson
08-Pat Dawson
09-Kevin McGeer
10-Glenys Dickson
11-Lynette Reynolds
11-Gary Thompson
12-Neville Gallie
12-Eunice Duckitt

14-Connie Johnson
14-Rosie Dickinson
17-Kees Vreedenburgh
18-Daphne Brown
19-Julie Phillips
21-Sheila Lyon
23-Enid Vreedenburgh
25-Caroline Doherty
28-Clive Dunn
29-Graham Elliott



Grief never ends.... But it changes.. It is a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith It is the price of love. Author Unknown

Phyllis Mackenzie



04-Darryl & Jenipher Lavender
07-Neville & Jean Gallie
08-Eddie & Lynette Reynolds
10-David & Alma Easton
26-Brian & Eunice Duckitt



PARISH CONTACT DETAILS:

Cnr Elangeni & Nqutu Roads, Hillcrest
P O Box 148 Hillcrest 3650

☎: 031-765 5941 ☎: 031-765 5077

✉: office@holytrinity.co.za / Website: www.holytrinity.co.za

Banking details:

Account Name: Hillcrest Anglican Church
Nedbank Hillcrest Branch 1338 26
Account No. 1338 034 057

Please check our website, www.holytrinity.co.za, for all the latest news and activities!