



Holy Trinity Hillcrest

News Letter February 2016

Dear God's people,



Added to the woes of the international economic challenges, South Africans were shocked at the outburst that caused a national outcry and threatened to further polarise our fragile unity. The sleeping monster of racism raised its ugly head and surprised many with the unnecessary and demeaning utterances, the reaction of immediately dissociating from the perpetrators and the unfortunate exploitation of a bad situation by the opportunist. Sadly the few and tentative gains we made in nation building were lost in what appears to be a 'heat of the moment' utterance.

Most of us here have lived through a time when racist policies were legislated and segregation enforced. At the dawn of our new democratic dispensation we all breathed a deep sigh of relief because the negotiated Constitution was accepted by the majority of South Africans and the transition from apartheid to democracy was largely uneventful, or more accurately it did not result in what many were scared would happen, namely a blood bath. The dragon of our past had been put to sleep or so many of us thought. In the recent months what many thought had been buried and we had hoped forgotten reared its ugly head again. A few high profilers and role models, verbally expressed very demeaning, derogatory and defaming comments about fellow South Africans. The 'sensitivity barometer' blew its top and many seemed to be accused and labelled even if the intentions had nothing to do with blatant racial or discriminatory statements. So we are on tenterhooks and fearful that something we may say be construed as racist. What many commentators have identified, is that the majority of South Africans' perception of those who are different have not really changed from those that were held in the dark days of our history. It is probably that we were all so relieved that we 'arrived' at the new dispensation with few incidents and experienced the euphoria of the 1994 elections that we assumed no further engagement with the past is needed. South Africans fell into the trap of thinking that we can forge ahead without dealing with the pains of the past.

Even though apartheid was a legislated policy, its impact on this nation was more than merely keeping blacks and whites apart or of grading people along colour or complexion or hair texture lines. The emotional and psychological impact has left an indelible print on the victims' psyche. The deficit caused through the denial of a proper education, employment with a reasonable living wage, the stunting of developing ones skills and ability, of falling in love with someone from a different background can never be reversed even for a long line of their descendants.

The State is now proposing to correct this with more legislation. Have we not learned that laws will not necessary correct the attitudes that have been instilled in many; that building a nation or accepting our common humanity begins with how we perceive each other. True perceptions can only be formulated once we have had a personal interaction with another on an equal footing, our common humanity. Understanding who we are and what defines us requires that we engage with each other, share with one another, and identify our differences and understand why they are there.

A former cleric in the Dutch Reformed Church, Dr Beyers Naude, was excommunicated and relieved of all priestly duties because he spoke of the need of acceptance of people who were different. He was labelled an 'anti-apartheid activist' for his commitment to bringing people of different groups together. Courageously, he remained steadfast in his commitment and developed a non-threatening project of getting white families from Pretoria to go and spend a weekend in the township and then encouraged them to reciprocate the hospitality by inviting black families into their homes as guests. Oom Bey, as he was fondly called, believed that we change our view and perception of others by personally and physically involving ourselves with them. It is in the process of doing our day to day living that we learn how others live.

For Christians, though, there is a greater bond. To the Christians in Galatia St Paul writes, "As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3: 28-29 NRSV). Very wisely St Paul moved the focus away from us because of our inherent interest in self and directs us to Christ as the focal point. So for those who belong to Christ it will be completely wrong and sinful to judge another person on the basis of their colour or ethnicity or gender or social standing. For Jesus the acceptance of others was far more than religious affiliation or physical appearances. Jesus explains that we need to love our neighbour as we love ourselves and states that this is as important as our love for God. (Matthew 22: 37-39) In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) "Jesus teaches how our love needs to extend to others: it is the way we look at others that must be purified. Prejudice against others, which denies the equal dignity of all the members of the human family, can only be eradicated by going to its roots, where it is formed: in the human heart. It is from the heart that just or unjust behaviour is born, according to whether persons are open to God's will - in the natural order and in the Scriptures- or whether they close themselves up in a self-centeredness dictated by fear. Harboring racist thoughts and entertaining racist attitudes is a sin against the message of Christ for whom one's 'neighbour' is not only a person from my tribe, my religion or a fellow South African: it is every person I meet along the way. Christian teaching about the other person is enlightened by this biblical story." (Revd Canon Cyril Muller)

As we grapple with the issues of racism that impacts our national life we pray that God pour God's spirit into our hearts and minds that we may be free from the bondages of our past and that through the power of the Holy Spirit we will seek to identify the image of God in all the members of the human family. As God's children we are to work to change racist attitudes, including those within our own community. We appeal to the moral and religious sense of all people in this amazing land. We ask God to change hearts. Our mission is to give soul to this immense undertaking of human fraternity. Despite the sinful limitations of people in the Church, yesterday and today, we are aware of having being constituted a witness to Christ's charity on earth, a sign and instrument of the unity of humankind.

With my love and blessings Your priest and friend, Fr Gary

Education Sunday

On the 17 January we hosted representatives from six schools in Hillcrest for whom we prayed and commended to God as they began the academic year. We were privileged to listen to two of our parishioners who spoke very encouragingly and affirmatively of the work in our educational institutions. Following are extract of the talks by Shirley Thurbon, a retired lecturer from DUT speaking about the challenges and Dr Graeme Shuker who remains active in the governance of schools paying tribute to Teachers.

Challenges

The first challenge is that of disruptions caused by student protests. All we hear about in the media are the riots and it can make us think that our campuses are continually a seething mass of unrest and violence. Universities handle violence in varying ways but none seem to have found a way to prevent it. To protect the academic integrity of the institutions, many lecturers have redesigned their syllabi to include self-study components so students can work at home during closures. There are about 22000 students at DUT and only about 500 are usually involved in rioting. These protests usually occupy about 10% of the academic year and today I don't want to focus on this 10% but on what universities are doing in the other 90% of the year.

Prior to about 2000 the education structure consisted of schools, traditional universities, technical colleges where artisan training took place, and technikons which produced technologists who bridged the gap between artisans and traditional university graduates. Since then technical colleges have changed their name, and are now called Technical and Vocational Education and Training Facilities, while technikons have become universities of technology.

The second challenge which is the broadening of the Universities vision to include two new emphases. When we were at university the function of a university was teaching and research. Now the two concepts of student centeredness and engagement have been added and entrenched in Vision statements. There is ongoing debate about all the facets that each of these concepts involves. I am only going to mention one strand in each concept.

One of the most important aspects of student centeredness, is that students must become more responsible citizens and accountable for their own learning. This means that lecturers are not just conduits of knowledge transfer but must also increase their role in actively giving student's confidence in their own ability, encouraging them, guiding them and putting interventions in place for at risk students.

The second concept of engagement looks at the interface between students and the community. It is seen as an important link in the chain of producing citizens who are not only concerned with their own advancement but have also been exposed to using their newly acquired qualifications in a practical way to assist and give back to the community. This is already being implemented in medical training as new doctors are required to do community service after they graduate.

The third challenge concerns what is happening in the classrooms. Despite the number of paradigm shifts in the overall philosophy of education, the introduction of new curricula and teaching methods, there will always be students and educators in a classroom and it is that interaction that I have loved and found extraordinarily satisfying.

Now the classes are mixed in gender and race, the average class size being 100. There are pressures on current students that were not issues when we were at University eg many students are not academically well prepared or financially secure for the tertiary environment. The impact of HIV and AIDS has resulted in students heading families as parents having died. Many students have their own children and need to provide for them.

Shirley Thurbon

I was fortunate in my academic career to have been tutored by some outstanding academics and teachers. As an example may I refer to four of them.

From grades 1 to 5, I attended the Amatikulu Farm School in Zululand, We had two wonderful women who taught us. both inspired us to read and learn as much as we could. This was done by the excitement and encouragement of our teachers to listen and participate with our friends in the classes of those in the grades above ours. It was a doodle when I moved to boarding school into grade 6. I had learnt it all. At High School, I recall one amongst many outstanding teachers

Ben Milner was our Biology Teacher a man with an outstanding breadth of knowledge. We would spend time in the library finding some obscure subject and then at the beginning of the Biology lesson pose the question to Ben who would expound on the subject, with us believing that we were wasting 5 to 10 minutes of the Biology period

At the end of the year Ben said to us. "I suppose you all think that you have been leading me on with your obscure questions at the beginning of the Biology classes, but let me tell you, what you have learnt in these discussions will be of greater value to you, in the future. than all the biology I have taught you. I have broadened your minds and you have learnt to research in the library".

In my last lecture at University, with 6 of us students studying for our doctorates. Professor Owen Sturgess finished the lecture with one of the many other sound pieces he had given us. "I have taught all the soil science that I know, which will hold you in good stead in your future careers as soil scientists but will you all please stand up." The seats in the lecture theatre all fold back, and under the seat was pinned a 1 dollar U.S. bank note. The Prof added." Remember that you will never make an honest dollar unless you get off your backsides and work hard at what you do."

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sharing fun being together meeting Jesus

"Japanese lanterns" & a special story organised by Glenda Kyzer.



Awesome crafts!

On Wednesday 27th January 2016 we had our first Messy Church of the year, the theme was "Jesus being the light of the World".

As in the parable, many were fed with fish and bread.



"Jesus lights up my life" organised by Glenda Dickson.



"Stained glass" organised by Rosemary Combes



A great amount of fun was had by all, as we worshipped our amazing God!!!



An invitation to join the Hospital visiting Team.

Soon after the Hillcrest Private Hospital opened in June 2011 a group of hospital visitors was formed. Fr Ronnie Alexander was invited to give advice on how to proceed. The aim is for one or two members to visit the 1 medical and 2 surgical wards between 10.30a.m. and 12 noon on each week day.

The routine is pretty easy. As we enter each ward we ask permission of the staff to do visiting. By now, they know us so well that we are welcome. We go round the beds, one by one, introducing ourselves (we wear hospital visitors name tags) stating our name and that we are from Holy Trinity. The important part of this ministry is just to listen. A hospital day is long, being woken early and lights out late so most patients are only too happy to have someone to listen to their worries and fears.

We hope to just be a vessel that God can use to brighten their day. Offer to pray with them. Sometimes they want to pray for us. At times the staff ask for prayer. There had also been times when the offer of prayer was declined and "graciously one can say" God be with you anyway!" each patient's situation is very different so we have to be prepared for anything; from being told that a patient tried to commit suicide, or they've just lost a baby, or have just been diagnosed with cancer. We just pray that God will give us the right words in each case. It is important that we never give medical advice!

Whatever happens during our visits, all members' report that they come away from the hospital feeling better with the world than when they arrived. We remember Jesus' words quoted in Acts 20 : 35 "It is more blessed to give than to receive". Have you a little of your time to spare to brighten some one's day and to share the love of Jesus?

Submitted by *Rosemary Combes*

Good teachers do more than teach their subjects, they inspire their students to go the extra mile, teach values, good manners, politeness, honesty, how to take the hard knocks of failure, compassion for those less fortunate than themselves, walking out with a smile when you were given out L.B.W. when you know you got a thick inside edge, learning the value of playing as a member of a team. Many do not appreciate that sport, should be and is an integral part of the education process.

I recall the wisdom of a headmaster who accepted a boy into the school who was a paraplegic paralyzed from the waist down. He had to be carried by his school mates up and down stairs pushed in his wheel chair, put in and out of the bath, sometimes deliberating leaving him pretending that they had forgotten him. The parents were always grateful for the opportunity given to their son but the greatest benefactors were his friends who learnt the value of compassion.

I marvel at teachers, their commitment, enthusiasm, loyalty and dedication to the task of developing youth with skills to face the future with confidence and make a difference in the lives of others. I find teachers to be humble and self-effacing and I often wonder if they know how really amazing and good they are?.

So today we give Thanks to God for Christian founded schools, their Governors, Heads and Teachers and the wonderful commitment these people give to the development of youth and earnestly ask God to continue to pour his Blessing on then all.
- Dr Graeme Shuker

BITS AND PIECES!

February Birthdays



1 st	Thelma Rafferty	20 th	Dennis Rhodes
1 st	Beryl Saxby	20 th	Margi Silva
2 nd	Harold Walker	21 st	Tessa Thompson
5 th	Thora Golledge	22 nd	Norma Snyman
5 th	Glenda Kyzer	23 rd	Wendy liebetrau
8 th	Matthew du Sart	25 th	Matthew Johnson
9 th	Murray Phillpott	28 th	Heidi Benecke
12 th	Gavin McEwan		
12 th	Nan Lansdell		
15 th	Colin Stockland		

Happy Anniversary

5	David & Millie Tayfield
17	Philip & Jean Watson
19	Colin & Olga Russell
21	Graham & Lynn Elliot
23	Kevin & Maryke McGeer
28	Murray and Strawbs Phillpott

PARISH CONTACT DETAILS:

Rector:		Environmental	Maggie Fleming	031 765 7157
Rev Gary Thompson		Evening Women's Gp	Lynette Reynolds	031 716 8161
031 765 2578		Flowers	Margaret Vorwerf	031 765 4390
		Food Parcels	Rosemary Dickinson	031 765 2782
Deacon:		Garden	Jill Howard	031 765 1061
Rev Bruce Woolley		Hospital Visitors	Elaine Hutt	031 765 2188
		Lay Ministers	Rosemary Combes	031 762 1176
Church Wardens:		Martha's Friends	Ann Maud	031 765 2111
Peter Craig		Morning Women's Gp	Ann Maud	031 765 2111
Harold Walker		Musicians	Matthew du Sart	082 526 3518
Alternate Warden:		Music Group	Pat Dawson	031 765 8013
Clive Dunn		Prayer Chain	ean Gallie	031 765 5155
		Publications	Enid Vreedenburgh	031 765 5941
Youth Worker		Recorder	Marion Wakefield	031 716 8201
Althea Kroone		Readers	Sue Yates	031 765 4272
		Sacristans	Brenda Saville	031 765 1111
Parish Ministries:		Sides people	Errol Hicks	031 716 8872
Audio Visual		Tea Pourers	Joyce Mickel	031-7672927
Bookkeeper		Treasurer	Denis Saville	031 765 1111
Companionship		Warwick Link	Rosemary Combes	031 762 1176
Nigel Combes				
Doreen Hood				
Glenys Dickson				
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Please check our website, www.holytrinity.co.za, for all the latest news and activities!