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From the Vicar General's Desk



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COVID-19 impacts life at Cott



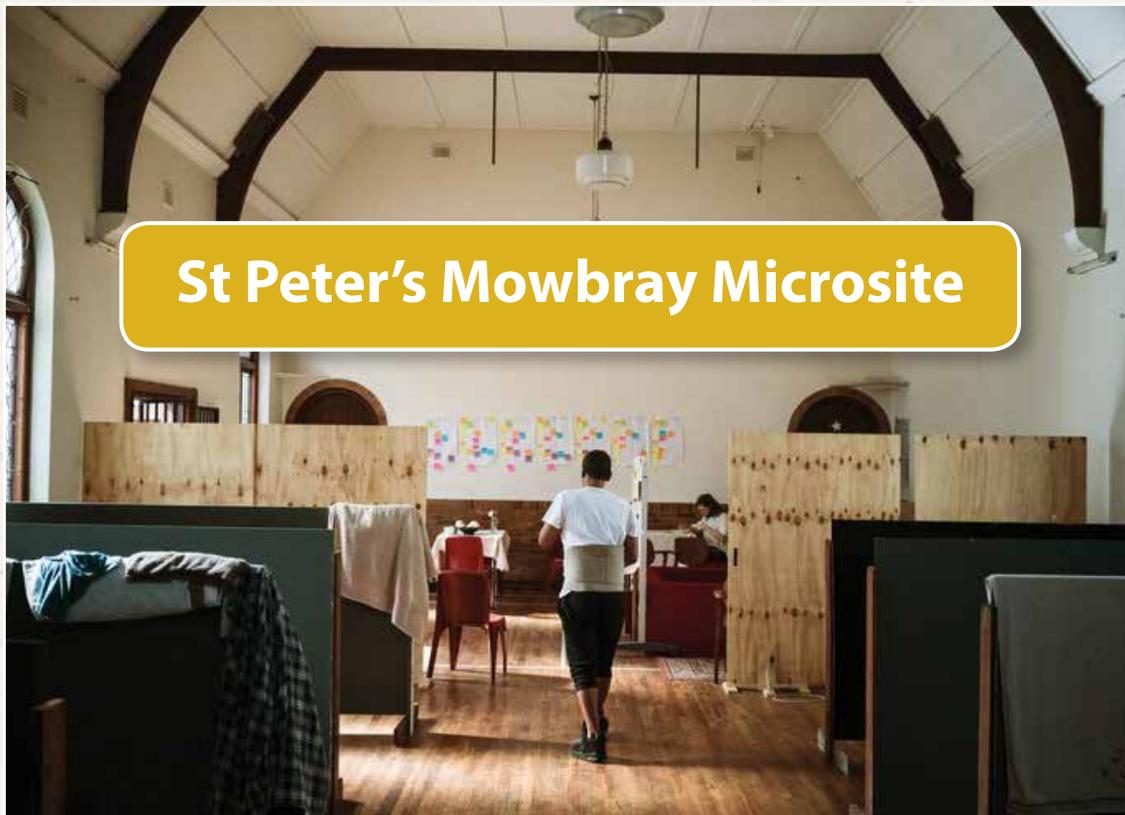
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Portals to the Divine
A source of inspiration during a difficult time



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St Mark's District 6 celebrates its 133rd anniversary



St Peter's Mowbray Microsite

Three weeks into the nationwide lockdown, on the 24th April 2020, the microsite was born at St Peter's Mowbray. Mattresses, bedding, dividers, washing facilities, food, PPE, toiletries, night supervisors, social workers, intake-procedure, drug withdrawal medication, volunteers, permits, psycho-social activities ... the list seemed never ending - but it was all eventually checked off! Our social worker, Vivien, and I headed out to the various parks and public spaces in search of people we knew from our Thursday night community dinners. It took some time but we eventually started bumping into faces we recognised.

After a series of interviews on the streets and around 10 formal invitations we had 6 men join our microsite family: Mohammed; Mitch; Zuri; Marco; Timothy and Neville.* Establishing the purposes of the microsite was an important aspect for us to consider in various circumstances and I'd like to share them with you now:

1. **Relief during lockdown** - providing a temporary safe space for people during the lockdown period which allows for someone to self-isolate away from the streets.
2. **Provide an opportunity** for someone to take the next step in life away from the streets. Whether a person takes that opportunity was up to them.

**Some names changed for privacy.*

Leila, our New Hope coordinator, joined the team as

another social worker. Leila and Vivien worked hard together to ensure that each resident had a clear plan for settling into community life. Routine really helped calm anxiety and gave everyone clear direction what was happening in each part of the day. Psycho-social activities included several workshops, exercise and sport activities. Skill courses saw the residents making planter boxes, learning their way around a computer and cooking classes. Most of these were run by volunteers who committed time each week and built warm friendships with the residents. Each resident had a Personal Development Plan (PDP) and participated in personal growth time each day.

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EDITORIAL

John 14:9,11 "... Anyone who has seen me (Jesus) has seen the Father. ... Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me ..."

We worship God the Creator; we worship Jesus who experienced the life of a human; and we worship the way that God works within us - the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is described as a 'mystery', and a reality beyond our human comprehension.

"God exists in both perfect oneness and community. He is perfect in every way, transcending all creation, sending Jesus to live among humanity, and empowering believers by the Spirit."

God is love and love conquers all.

Love and Light, Rebecca

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St Peter's Microsite from page 1:

We are fortunate to have 2 computer desktops, a TV and the internet to aid some of the skill courses, give relevant news about the coronavirus and provide some valuable entertainment in the evenings. As time progressed we adapted to the needs that emerged. We got nothing right on the first attempt but after refinement and tweaking everything seemed to fall in place and work smoothly.

All of the residents were living either on the streets or residing at the Strandfontein Homeless Camp before coming onto the microsite. The latter were all taken to Lancet Laboratories for official testing and thankfully all tested negative for the virus. A group of doctors provided incredible care & support for all the residents on site. In the first month everyone had two consultations a week. Dr Houston, Dr

Wulz & Dr Crombie gave expert advice, scripts and prognosis for the residents to get the help they needed.

When you live on the streets you enter 'survival mode' and it's incredible difficult to escape it. Trust is a foreign word for most people who live outside as law enforcement, home owners, CID's and even your 'street friends' can turn on you should you not act according to how society expects. It took a few days, and maybe even a few weeks, before some of the guys opened up about their lives and began to trust again - and in turn making themselves vulnerable to being hurt again. Our hope was to start seeing that hurt begin to heal - but first there needs to be trust. Within the first 3 weeks we started to see a glimmer in the eye, a smile on some faces and an occasional belly laugh. There is nothing sweeter than seeing hope restored in someone who it's been stripped from numerous times.

There is still a long journey ahead of us as we most likely will continue into lockdown level 3 and 2. We are currently spending around R5000 a week to run the microsite (which works out to be R2000 per person per month) That cost includes 3 healthy meals a day and snacks, social work support, medical support (including medication), 24/7 supervision in case of emergencies, access to the internet, news and entertainment; workshops and skills courses (including computer literacy) and many more aspects. Because we've limited the microsite to 10 people it will mean we can give the best opportunities to the residents on site and cater for their specific vocations and skills.

We have the funding to operate for another

6 weeks and beyond that is unknown. If you are encouraged by this microsite community, please consider supporting us financially and help us achieve our goal to provide sustainable, long-term pathways out of homelessness for the residents in the microsite. Please find our bank details below:
Name: New Hope SA NPO 205-687
Bank: Nedbank
Account number: 1165070863
Branch: 10480900
Swift Code: NEDSZAJJ
Reference: MICROSITE - very important as it helps us budget.
Please send notification to info@newhopesa.org if you would like a section 18A tax-deductible certificate.

If you'd like to support us from abroad please visit our donate page for more info: <https://www.newhopesa.org/donate>

- Richard Bolland

- Photographer: Bruce Meissner





Dear Sisters and Brothers

In what is called the high priestly prayer of Jesus, John 17:20-21a says: "I ask not only on behalf of these,

but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one" (NRSV).

1908 was a time of deep spiritual thirst in the world and the Church's witness was seriously compromised by division and disunity. This prayer of Jesus inspired the idea of a "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity." We observe this week from Ascension Day to Pentecost Sunday and mark it with interdenominational initiatives.

I never imagined that I would see this important Christian expression conclude with South Africans across all faith traditions, united in a day of prayer for our country on Pentecost Sunday. President Cyril Ramaphosa made this call when he announced that easing the Covid-19 lockdown regulations to level 3, including opening up religious places of worship. He asked us to play our part in all the efforts to break the chain of transmission of the virus. The national call to prayer was urgent as we head toward an anticipated spike in infections and deaths from the dreaded pandemic. Prayer for the guidance of God's Spirit to help us through this debilitating, epoch-making event in world history can hardly be more pressing.

The Week of Prayer for Christianity Unity coincides with the ecumenical global prayer movement "Thy Kingdom Come." Christians around the world are invited to pray from Ascension to Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus and to make the Lord's Prayer a greater reality in people's lives.

The prayer movement started as an Anglican initiative in 2016 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for the Church of England. This initiative was an urgent call as in the United Kingdom, during the first week after the 2016 Brexit vote, hate crimes against foreigners increased in London by forty-eight per cent.

What started as a local initiative soon spread to the worldwide Anglican Communion and is now an international interdenominational call to global prayer. Archbishop Justin Welby said: "In praying 'Thy Kingdom Come' we all commit to playing our part in the renewal of the nations and the transformation of communities." One of the parishes in this Diocese which embarked on the ten days of prayer, included a 24 hour prayer chain on Saturday



30 May bolstering the prayers for the renewal and transformation of our country, our continent and the wider world. There is much talk from many quarters about not letting this unprecedented crises go to waste. As people of faith, we Christians must not let the opportunity to be profoundly missional and evangelistic pass us by.

"Now is indeed the time for renewal and transformation for us, as a Church. It is also the time for the Church to play its part in doing the same for this world in which we live..."

It is a "Kairos" moment (an opportune time), to make a significant contribution to shaping the post coronavirus world in a more Christ-like fashion. We can see that this pandemic confronts us with radical uncertainty. Under lockdown level 3 regulations, churches and other religious places of worship are allowed to open under very strict conditions. Still, our church buildings remain closed for worship until further notice. When should we open? Will it be wise? What will it take? Will it do more harm than good? So many questions arise to name a few.

On the medical front, never before have we seen the greatest minds across so many different disciplines and from all countries across the world, work together to fight this SARS-Cov-2 virus from every possible angle. Despite this unprecedented spirit of collaboration, there is a long road toward certainty in answering our many questions; be it personal, social or economic. Such radical uncertainty

has erased the pre-pandemic future we have imagined and made plans for. We now have to re-imagine the future, invented almost from scratch. Would we have imagined a future where a virus would teach us that "we can live without soccer players who earn obscene salaries but we cannot live without garbage collectors who earn next to nothing?" A sobering comment I heard in a talk on shaping the future economy.

Now is indeed the time for renewal and transformation for us, as a Church. It is also the time for the Church to play its part in doing the same for this world in which we live. Trinity Sunday, on the steps of St George's Cathedral, Archbishop Thabo was joined by other faith leaders in prayerful protest. They gathered to express solidarity with the "Black Lives Matter" rebellion in America, against police brutality which resulted in four people being killed. Their protest was also against the law enforcement brutality during the lockdown which caused the deaths of twelve people in our own country.

A radio presenter raised the ire of some Christians when he decried being denied visiting friends during level 3 lockdown, yet Christians were allowed to visit Jesus, their "imaginary" friend in church. Jesus is no imaginary friend. Hans Frei (1922-88) an Anglican priest and professor of theology at Yale University, reminds us that the life and teaching of Jesus establishes the norm and model by which Christians should engage the world and current events.

Jesus was certainly a historical human being, but he did not have religious value and become the Christ of our faith simply because he existed "once upon a time." Jesus becomes factual when incarnated in our daily lives. Jesus insisted that his followers' minister to the needy, feed the hungry, care for the sick, show love for everybody, even enemies. He challenged the injustices and inequality thrust upon people by the Roman Empire and their Herodian dynasty puppets.

At the root of societies many problems, both global and international, is the growing inequality that modern society has been unable to address despite all its good intentions. Pray God that this time around we will contribute far more significantly to shaping the future by making Jesus factual through the witness of our lives in words and deeds.

Grace and Peace
Keith De Vos

How has COVID-19 impacted life at the College of the Transfiguration?



The beginning of every academic year is a gift and an exciting moment for all of us. The focus is on receiving new seminarians and their families into our community and reuniting with returning ones.

The first term is not only about laying on of a foundation, but it can also be a disruptive moment for new students, as they delve into the world of theological studies. And what it takes to live in our community, its rules, early morning meditation and late-night Compline Prayer service.

To have our mapped-out routine disrupted mid-first term again this year to no fault of our own was a big blow. We had the first disruption and abrupt end to the first term in March 2019, when Grahamstown / Makhanda was without water for 6 days straight. And in 2020

it is COVID-19 pandemic.

How are we continuing with the 2020 academic plan? This was a question laden with concern and fear. And thanks to the academic staff for taking a crash course on online teaching and they continue to learn and explore new ways of online teaching. And carrying out the formation programme.

By the time we left the campus to self-isolate students and academic staff we clear on which platforms they will continue with the learning and teaching program.

What we were not ready for were challenges associated with off-campus learning, such as no access to internet connectivity, expensive data bundles, no scanners or printers and no access to library materials for some of our

seminarians. The urban and rural divide was very clear and brought up questions of how you grade and access the seminarian's academic work.

Now how do we return to on-campus life? Without a doubt, it is going to be a different return. Our return will be phased-in and condition-based, the College Return to Campus Team has been set-up and will be guided by the COVID-19 Direction on Health and Safety in the Workplace issued by the government in terms of Regulation 10(8) of the National Disaster Regulation, the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations governing workplaces concerning coronavirus disease and other best practices to support the successful reopening of the College.

Our phased-in return will be an opportunity to explore new ways of being a seminary, a place where future lay and ordained leadership are formed, informed and will go on to transform the church and communities. We will have to be innovative and explore ways of being church and doing worship during a pandemic or similar challenge. As we do this, we will guard that we do not lose our Anglican ethos. As a leader of this institution, I will be inspired by the 4 Pillars of Anglicanism - Tradition, Reason, Scripture and Experience as we re-imagine our academic and formation programs.

Until we are reunited, we continue to pray for the safety and wellness of everyone and a scientist as they develop a vaccine for this virus.

- the Revd Canon Vicentia Kgabe
Rector of the College of Transfiguration NPC

Checking in with our seminarians

Kieran Groepe: "For a long time the College of Transfiguration seemed far away in distance and time. Preparations for seminary were ongoing, many tearful goodbyes were exchanged and soon it was Friday the 24th of January 2020 and I was on a bus to Grahamstown (Makhanda). I often replay the events of leaving home, traveling overnight and entering seminary and my room for the first time. Abruptly I would experience the same events almost two months later due to Covid-19.

The Collect for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany and my first Sunday in Grahamstown appropriately describes the significance of being on this journey and the part of the



journey that I find myself on currently. New beginnings, courageously and joyfully following God and new adventures of faithful service. That Sunday signalled the beginning of the newest part of a journey taken by so many others before me. That Sunday like the daily ringing of the bell which is something I miss now, announced the adventure of faithful service that I was about to take. One prays daily for the courage and joy to continue to follow especially on the days when the adventure is difficult and when home is a bit too far away.

Oddly home can take many forms and with online learning the distance seems more extensive.

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Kieran from page 4: For weeks there is the rhythm of seeing the same people in the same environment much as if you were home with immediate family. The challenge currently is not seeing fellow seminarians who have become sisters and brothers regularly. Ash Wednesday Eucharist in the Chapel where we were all dressed in our black cassocks identified us as seminarians but also as belonging to the same community. One does realise that home is where the feeling and familiarity of community is, that the distance created by this virus requires courage and joyful following to sustain sisterhood, brotherhood and adventure.

Seminary is a unique experience where you are challenged and confronted by concepts and theories but comforted by the daily celebration of the Eucharist and the dining hall a place where the breaking of bread is extended to the breaking down of barriers and ideas.

A considerable emphasis has been placed on all of us in terms of how we interact with each other and experience life alongside Covid-19. The first verse of the hymn by William Cowper seems appropriate for the uncertainty of the new beginning, the new adventure of faithful service:

*Jesus, where'er thy people meet,
there they behold thy mercy-seat;
where'er they seek thee thou art found,
and every place is hallowed ground.*

This journey will be filled with the events of leaving home, traveling overnight and entering new rooms for the first time. May the new adventure of faithful service always be a new beginning. Pray for me, always."



Siphe Nyaba: "Reflecting on the first term at the College of Transfiguration, I would have to say that my time at the College has been an enriching experience thus far. The College as an institution of learning presents us an opportunity to be in class with ordinands/students from all over the Province. We are from different backgrounds and cultures bringing our own understanding or "truth" of what it means to be the Church. This rich diversity has been a great learning experience about what it truly means to be followers of Christ beyond the church walls.

As we gather at the iconic Freedom Square or at the dining room, conversing on the issues we face as a society and Church, I have been able to gather a lot of practical application from these discussions with my fellow seminarians. They do not articulate their spiritual problems with fancy terms or even the right language, but they explain it in terms of real life experiences and the nitty-gritty of the every day.

The College has challenged me in many ways: theologically, it has put to the test everything I thought I know about God and the Christian faith. As individuals, we are challenged to be obedient to the routine of early morning meditation in the Chapel for the Eucharist and the Daily Offices. The water crisis in Makhanda is serious as some parts of the area go without water for weeks. As the College community, we are asking the question: how do we as Christian community respond to this? How do, we as the church, respond to this ecological crisis?

Finally, being in formation in community; walking alongside others as we attempt to make sense of our calling to the ordained ministry has been invaluable. This has proof that a Priest is not made overnight, instead a Priest is formed through continuous discernment and reflection as the Reverend Canon Neil-Allan Walsh shared with me during his visit at the College. He shared with me what it means to be a Priest in the 21st Century so that as I continue to discern my vocation it may be clear what the work of a priest is today.

Sadly our first term was brought to an abrupt end following President Ramaphosa's announcement of a nationwide lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This announcement came at a time when I was reflecting on what it means to be the Church during these trying times that we are faced with and one of the notable insights I received is how important it is to contextualise the Gospel to a particular ministry setting.

I give thanks to you all for the prayers and support that you have offered during my time at the College."

Portals to the Divine

A source of inspiration during a difficult time



On the peak of the Corcovado mountain overlooking Rio de Janeiro, mounted on an eight-metre high pedestal, is the thirty-metre statue of **Christ the Redeemer**, wide outstretched

arms seeming to offer sanctuary to the whole world. On 27 September 2016 the platforms and walkways leading up to the statue were filled with a motley crowd of people including grannies with sticks, couples taking selfies, Americans, Africans, Japanese, Europeans, children eating ice creams, and the ubiquitous tourists in kinky hats.

Above the babbling cacophony rang out the lone voice of a small, middle-aged man in worker's clothes, singing Josh Groban's song:

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am strong when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be.*

The huge crowd fell silent and became still.

The singer's eyes were on the face of Christ, and his clear voice offered to each witness a unique and deeply spiritual experience.

Moments like this come only seldom to most of us. While Arthur Sullivan was at the bedside of his dying brother, he composed the music of *The Lost Chord* which famously begins, Seated one day at the organ:

*I struck one chord of music
Like the sound of a great Amen*

*I have sought but I seek it vainly
That one lost chord divine,
Which came from the soul of the organ
And entered into mine. continues on page 8*



Dear Parishioners, Clergy and Bishops

Since before South Africa's first lockdown came into effect, leaders of member churches of the SA Council of Churches have met regularly to discuss our role in the pandemic. As we worked through the issues and listened to the medical scientists, we heard that we will have to live with this virus for months, even years, and that it might return again and again to disrupt our lives. Moreover, it became clear that the question we faced was not whether worship would be resumed – we will not be closed in perpetuity, the question is rather when and how we will re-open. A sub-committee of church leaders that I led compiled detailed representations, based on the principle that we should regulate the re-opening of worship and other activities ourselves. We held a number of discussions with Government, at the end of which President Ramaphosa announced publicly that they had accepted our representations. It has to be said that he acted unexpectedly quickly, and it is a pity that we were unable to co-ordinate our communications because his announcement led to unnecessary panic. But we welcomed the trust which the Government had placed in us, albeit in trepidation at the enormous responsibility placed on our shoulders.

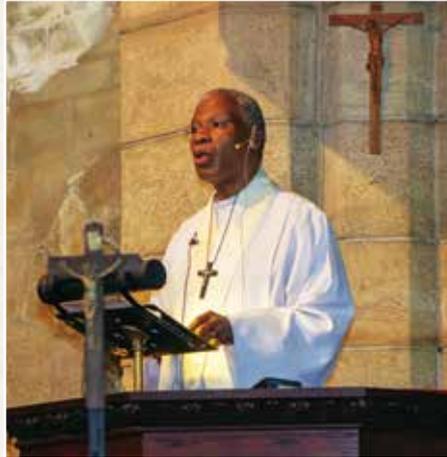
Now we need to decide the when and the how. But we must be cautious and act prudently. The Spirit of Pentecost is also one of wisdom. Paul, who rejoiced always in the Spirit alive in him after years of ministering and exercising oversight of the churches, had to remind the Galatians that a fruit of the Spirit was also self-control.

Among those within ACSA whom I consulted on the SACC representations were members of the Provincial COVID-19 Advisory Team, which comprises medical, legal and theological experts. In response to South Africa's Level 3 lockdown, I asked the team to come up with a consensus view on how to move ahead. A number of Bishops have also consulted with their Dioceses and taken preliminary decisions themselves.

From the COVID-19 Advisory Team's preliminary report as well as reports from Dioceses, the following main points have emerged:

- The Advisory Team reports a consensus that it is not yet time to resume worship.
- No Diocese so far has pronounced that it is ready to resume worship;
- Most reports suggest that it will take a month

To the Laos - to the people of God



or two – or longer – to gather the data needed before a decision can be made.

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to re-opening for worship. Dioceses outside South Africa have differing lockdown regimens. Within South Africa, different Dioceses face differing levels of infection and will have to adjust their strategies according to data on the level of risk in their areas (just as Government is doing).

- The Advisory Team suggests that Dioceses should show solidarity by agreeing that either all parishes within a Diocese should resume worship, or none should. Since parishes with fewer material resources will find it more difficult to be ready for worship, this would encourage those with more resources to partner and share with others.

- There is a need for legal clarity on levels of approval for coronavirus readiness plans and the legal liability of Dioceses and parishes in the event of infections contracted in church. Some Dioceses suggest that parishes need to be accountable to Dioceses for meeting conditions enabling them to return to worship, with designated Coronavirus Compliance Officers ensuring that safe conditions are met.

Apart from the steps to be taken to prepare for a return to worship, once services resume there will be other challenges. For example:

- How should leaders in a parish respond if more than 50 worshippers arrive for a service?
- How should they respond if congregants begin singing or mingling spontaneously?

- There is very serious concern about the return of parishioners and clergy who are over 60 years old. In a consultation church leaders held last weekend with Professor Salim Abdool Karim, who chairs South Africa's Ministerial Advisory Committee on COVID-19, he warned us that the death rate for COVID-19

patients between 60 and 70 is three times higher than for others, and the risk is particularly big if conditions such as diabetes and hypertension are not well managed. For those above 70 with pre-existing conditions, the risks of having COVID-19 are very high, and they should self-isolate and stay at home until a vaccine is found.

All these issues, and others in the SACC guidelines, need to be addressed before we can return to worship. My hope is that we can develop a phased process of planning and return to worship, linked to significant festivals in the calendar, such as:

- * Trinity Sunday
- * Corpus Christi
- * The Feast of the Transfiguration, and
- * The Commemoration of Robert Gray.

There are also matters other than worship to address. Churches can be open for private prayer, for feeding the hungry, for helping with the overflow from schools and for testing where this is possible.

Clergy who are teachers, school chaplains and professors will be walking alongside pupils as schools open, hospital chaplains will continue their ministry under guidelines laid down by hospitals, and police and military chaplains should continue supporting these men and women who ensure our safety and security.

The National Church Leaders' Forum of the SACC continues to meet to review and study together all the areas which call for mutual action and joint articulation.

New, shared leadership and energy is emerging amidst the uncertainties of the pandemic. This is truly Pentecostal for it is what the Spirit always does; it calls to newness and to transforming power.

Together, let us seize the opportunity to work with the challenge and come out of this time a better church and better Christians.

As President Ramaphosa has reminded us, let us also remember Madiba's exhortation: "It is in our hands."

God bless you.

+ Thabo Cape Town

This is an edited extract of the Letter for Pentecost posted online, to read the full text, <https://archbishop.anglicanchurchsa.org/2020/06/a-letter-for-pentecost-archbishop-thabo.html>

St Mark's District 6 celebrates its 133rd anniversary



Climbing the hill when the chips was down

St Mark's District 6 celebrated its 133rd anniversary on 25th April 2020. Although the celebrations were somewhat curtailed and muted, we managed via Facebook and WhatsApp to reach out to one another. We thank God for this historic place of worship and celebrated both past and present members.

"I extend my greetings and blessings to the congregation of St Mark's District Six as they celebrate their 133rd anniversary. Over the past 133 years you survived two World Wars and the Forced Removals in the 1960's. Now, together with the entire world, you are faced with another challenge in 2020. Continue, as you have done in the past - to be a beacon of hope to those in your parish and the broader community of Cape Town," Archdeacon Donovan Meyer.

Happy anniversary St Marks D6!

- the Revd Clifford Jones (interim priest)



ACSA through HOPE Africa feeds 1000 families

Thanks to your tremendous generosity during the first phase of the lockdown, the Anglican Church of Southern Africa – through HOPE Africa – were able to fundraise and support God's people in the following amazing ways:

* 9 Dioceses assisted to date

- 1000 Families supported through food voucher systems
- 2 Childrens' Homes supported
- One Shelter housing 85 homeless persons and staff

- Providing essential services at various health facilities.
- Ensure that our staff have the necessary PPE to be able to render effective services

During the next phase, HOPE Africa plans to:

- Extend assistance to more Dioceses through the food voucher system
- Continue to support and walk alongside all Bishops and Social Development Co-ordinators with the aim of elevating the Church's response to the COVID-19 throughout the Province
- Continue to seek meaningful partnerships here and abroad that will enhance the Church's response to this pandemic

We are thankful for the tremendous responses received to date and trust and pray that we can count on your continued support as we navigate our way through the next phase of the lockdown.

God bless Africa, guide our leaders, guard our children and give us peace

HOPE Africa SA account details – for EFT and Debit order instruction

Account Name: HOPE Africa, **Bank:** Standard Bank;
Branch Code: 051001; **Acc Number:** 070149380

HOPE Africa UK account details – for EFT and Debit order instruction

Account Name: HOPE Africa UK Support, **Bank:** Natwest Bank; **Sort Code:** 601609; **Acc Number:** 75679760

ONLINE DONATIONS: Go to - www.hopeafrica.org.za

USA – through the National Christian Foundation Portal

<https://mygiving.secure.force.com/GXDonateNow?id=a0U0H00000ZPmgsUAD>



YPM initiative Pentecost #SundayInRed

The Feast of Pentecost was celebrated on Sunday 31st May 2020 and to heed the State President's call for a National Day of Prayer, our YPM in collaboration with the other Western Cape dioceses encouraged all to wear red to recall the gifting of the Holy Spirit as our Advocate and Guide.



Portals of the Divine from page 5:

Such unexpected moments could be described as portals to the divine. These gateways need by no means to be linked to the well-known, but can arrive in the beauty of nature, art, or even a sleeping child. In the case of man-made sources of wonder, talented people have done the groundwork.

The towering statue in Brazil was conceived and built by Brazilians over nine years (1922 to 1931) using the design of a French sculptor, while the face is the work of a Romanian. Sullivan's organ was one of a sequence of musical instruments developed over centuries.

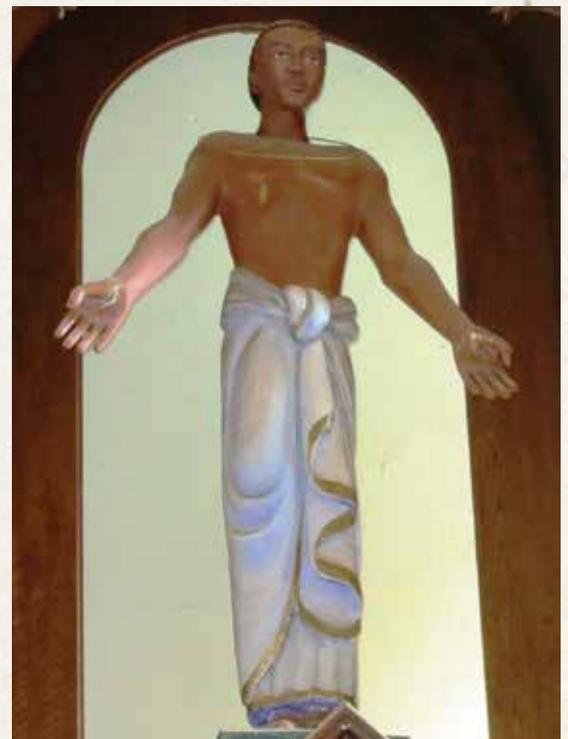
Counted among the world's visionaries must be Abbot Francis Pfanner who from 1882 established twenty-two Trappist Missions in KwaZulu-Natal. Visitors and staff alike find boundless inspiration in these still-functioning Mission Stations

which house various works of art such as the **Black Christ** at Mariathal, also with arms outstretched.

There are as many reactions to life as there are people, so while for some, an experience approaches the sublime, it could pass others by unnoticed. Keeping our minds, souls and spirits open and receptive can lead to visions of the divine in everyday life, building a stronger faith even when the world is at its darkest and most frightening.

The acceptance and comfort expressed in the portrayals of both Christ the Redeemer and the Black Christ are reminders of the recent parting words of a Jewish friend, "Remember at all times in whose hands you are."

- **Judith Gordon**
(report and photography)



We would love to hear from your parish, send articles and photographs to Rebecca Malambo at malambor@ctdiocese.org.za or call 021 469 3766.

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