

If you cannot see the pictures, use the right-hand mouse click and select 'Download pictures'. If you are still having problems, email us

You are receiving this information about the Denis Hurley Centre because you have shown an interest in the work done by us or one of our partners. We hope that you will enjoy receiving this monthly update. If you have any comments please email us.

If you do not want to receive emails from us, scroll to the end for information about unsubscribing and also our obligations under the POPI Act. If you would like to recommend us to anyone you know please send us their email address if they consent.



UPDATE



Care • Education • Community
Tel: 031 301 2240 www.denishurleycentre.org

Ukunakekela • Imfundo • Umphakathi
admin@denishurleycentre.org

November 2023

Fundraising Christmas Concert
Remembering those who Inspired Us
An unusual Retreat at the DHC
Eve of World AIDS Day



**Memorial Mass
in November**



**Prayer before
Meals**



**AIDS education
for teens**

A SPECTACULAR START TO THE FESTIVE SEASON

Over 500 people left filled with joy after the DHC fundraising concert at the end of November. This was our first full-scale fundraising event since COVID (after several false starts) but it was worth the wait. At the kind invitation of Bishop Neil Frank, we were in Mariannahill Cathedral, the magnificent German-style edifice about 20km outside Durban. And it was almost full!

The music was generously provided by the Durban Symphonic Choir under the baton of Dr Ros Conrad, with Dr Chris Cockburn playing the organ. The choir, which numbers over 50 voices including our own Raymond Perrier, sang a selection of Christmas carols. The audience joined in with some of the well-known ones and sat back and enjoyed the more modern ones. There were soloists from among the choir including Mervyn Bartholomew, Sabelo Ngcobo and Billi-Jean Parker (whose solo voice seared into the Cathedral from the balcony with the opening of the carol 'Once in Royal David's City').

We were even more blessed to have two guest soloists who are among the most sought-

after voices in the country. Nozuko Teto is a soprano who has already given a recital for the DHC and sang at our Meal of Reconciliation last year. Her rendition of the Bach/Gounod 'Ave Maria' was for many in the audience a 'goose-bump' moment, especially since we had dedicated the concert to mothers and babies (Muslim, Jewish and Christian) who are suffering at this time in the Holy Land.

Nozuko commented: "The concert was a true reflection of the impact of live music in our society. For me as a performer, seeing so many people come through to support the cause made it really worth the effort. Having been at the DHC myself, I know that this will mean the world to those who come there for help."

The other soloist, Sibonelo Mbanjwa, is also a priest and a member of the religious order, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, which counts both +Denis Hurley and +Neil Frank among its members. He was delighted, as an Oblate, to be singing in the cathedral of another Oblate, in honour of a third Oblate – and with a number of his Oblate brothers there to cheer him on!

Not only was there great music but there was great fundraising as well. Because all the players involved generously gave their services for free, every penny of the money from ticket sales goes straight to support our feeding programme over Christmas: a total of R51,700!

There are more wonderful photos on our Facebook page and also some great comments from people who attended: "A truly joyful and life giving experience...we will carry this joy throughout the Christmas season"; "It was a joy. I haven't sung as enthusiastically since school! The soloists were quite superb. Altogether a memorable occasion."

A highlight for many was when Nozuko and Sibonelo together sang the magnificent 'Holy City'. In his closing remarks, Raymond commented on how fitting the words are. He asked the audience to imagine how Durban could be that Holy City – not quite 'beside a tideless sea' but a place where 'the light of God was on the streets'. The hymn could be describing the DHC when it talks of the new Jerusalem as a place where: "The gates are opened wide/ And all who would might enter/ And no one was denied."

We give thanks for all who made this event such a great success and pray that, as we sing Christmas carols over the next few weeks, the words will take root in our hearts and lives.

Photo: Fr Sibonelo and Nozuko with the Durban Symphonic Choir in the magnificent setting of Mariannhill Cathedral.



INSPIRING LECTURES TO HONOUR THOSE WHO HAVE INSPIRED US

November is traditionally a month for remembering those who have passed away. One way in which we did this was with our Annual Memorial Mass for the Deceased.

This was celebrated at the DHC by Fr 'Junior' Mtshali, the new curate at the Cathedral, on the 5th anniversary of the death of our founder Paddy Kearney. We remembered Paddy, Paul Nadal and recently deceased Patrons (Ben Ngubane, Jerry Coovadia and Bishop Maurice Taylor). We also prayed for various deceased donors (especially those who have left us legacies), family members of staff who have died, and service users of the DHC who have passed away (and may have no one to pray for them). On our website, we maintain [a page that lists the names of people dear to us who have died so that their names and their contribution will not be forgotten.](#)

There have also been some excellent and inspiring lectures in the last few weeks that honour people who have left us.

For almost 30 years, the Archdiocese of Durban has hosted an annual Justice & Peace lecture: initially this was named in honour of +Hurley and now, since the sad demise of Archbishop Abel, it has been re-named the Hurley-Gabuza lecture. Both Archbishops had in their time been the head of the national Justice & Peace department of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The year's lecturer was Fr Joe Phiri OMI who is the Rector of St Joseph's Theological Institute Cedara. This is located about 100 km from Durban and trains priests, brothers and sisters for a number of Catholic religious orders and from many countries in Africa and beyond. Fr Joe, who is originally from Zambia, highlighted the importance of us giving attention to the mental health needs of the communities around us, but also our own mental health.

Rev Delysia Timm, who is not only DHC chair but also Dean of Studies for the Anglican Diocese of Natal, thanked Fr Joe. She shared about the health support that the DHC provides through our clinic as well as the meals provided to assist the homeless community. She encouraged Catholic parishes who were present to be in partnership with the DHC to serve the needs of community members, suffering as a result of mental illness.

Meanwhile, lectures about our founder Paddy Kearney were taking place in both Cape Town (in collaboration with *The Southern Cross*) and Johannesburg (with We Are All Church SA and the Jesuit Institute). An audience of about 30 people at each event heard the newly minted 'Dr Raymond Perrier' talk about Paddy's life as a model for the role of lay people in the Church. A number of people attending had been interviewed by Raymond for his thesis so this was an opportunity to honour them and to thank them for their invaluable contribution. Included among them were Tim McCrindle who had been a Marist novice with Paddy in the 1960s, and journalist Sydney Duval, Prof Doug Irvine and Loek Goemans from the Grail Community all of whom knew Paddy for over 50 years.

A copy of the lecture is attached and there is [a link to a recent article](#) in *The Southern Cross* about the importance of documenting the past. *The Southern Cross* has for over 100 years chronicled the work of the Catholic Church in South Africa but can only survive through readers paying for copies. To subscribe for a print version or a digital [click here.](#)

Photo (left to right): Kallie Senyane (Durban J&P), Rev Dr Delysia Timm (Chair of DHC Trustees), Fr Joe Phiri OMI (lecturer) and Maj. Gen Victoria Mekute (Catholic Women's Association) at the 2023 Hurley-Gabuza lecture.



SANDWICH-MAKERS RETREAT

Musgrave Methodist is one of several churches who have been supporting us over the last few years by making sandwiches. Here their pastor, Rev. David Barbour, shares about a very special retreat he led at the DHC:

In the years when COVID ravaged our lives, many new initiatives were born to help and assist those most affected. In the Durban inner city, the needs of those living on the streets became dire, and an incredible network of concerned people from different faiths, churches, and organisations pulled together with the municipality to help feed and house the homeless. One of these initiatives involved making sandwiches by many individuals in the Musgrave and Durban North areas. This outreach continues to this day, with an average every week of 600 sandwich packs, equating to 1200 sandwiches, coming from the Musgrave faith communities and a similar amount from those in Durban North.

We recently decided to invite all those making sandwiches to an exposure day at the DHC to see where the sandwiches go and how God is working through the Centre. We also included times for prayer and reflection to allow us to be with God in our felt experience of the day and make choices about how we continue to be the hands and feet of Christ in the inner city. On the day, some of the retreatants realised they had not been in the inner city for decades, and it was an eye-opener for them to see the changes.

The first part of our day was spent listening to the stories of those who had been on the streets and who are now working for the DHC. It was sobering to hear life stories that spoke of untold hardship and suffering. Some had come to Durban from far-off places and war-torn areas, having experienced their own families being massacred through genocide in their home countries. Life on the streets of Durban was extremely hard for them, but they were able to find soap and a shower, a meal, and medical treatment at the DHC. It was gratifying to know that we could be a part of this generous love and care being offered.

It was also good to learn during the question and answer time that 'peanut butter' and 'jam' were the two top favourite spreads on the sandwiches, and this was duly noted by the sandwich makers. After hearing stories, we split up into three groups that rotated through the Victoria Market where we encountered sheep heads, trotters, and brains. After that, we headed off to smell the wonderful aroma of curries and spices piled high, next to clothes stores with beautiful African prints. Once we had finished there, we returned to the DHC for an informative guided tour of the kitchen and clinic.

It was a day that will not be forgotten by the sandwich makers. When they wake up early on a given morning to make sandwiches, the life stories of those who eat the sandwiches will come flooding back to them. The sights and smells of the streets will fill their senses, and they will now feel much more connected to the lives and souls of those

people each month, 27% of them female. Of the people we test, about 30% of the women and 27% of the men are HIV+. This is higher than the KZN average which is not surprising given that most of our patients are socially vulnerable and so at much higher risk of infection.

By running our own ARV clinic, we are able to immediately initiate people on life-saving Anti-Retroviral medication (or ARVs). (The ARVs and the HIV tests are supplied by the Department of Health). The simple act of taking one tablet per day radically suppresses the 'viral load' of people who are HIV+. This not only greatly reduces the chance of HIV developing into AIDS but also the chance of infecting someone else and especially of infecting an unborn baby in the womb.

It is wonderful that, for most South Africans, being HIV+ and taking ARVs is no longer a source of shame. Given that over 5.5 million people in SA are on ARVs (the largest programme in the world) it is not surprising that it has become normalised. But our patients face additional challenges.

Homeless people, living chaotic lives and often having their belongings stolen, may not always remember to take a daily tablet especially if they are feeling well. We have to work hard to keep them adherent to the medication and we have difficulty finding patients if they do not return. We also face barriers given their psycho-social situations and transient lifestyles, mental illnesses, lack of social support, and addiction issues. And often refugee women who are HIV+ are reluctant to have ARVs with them, for fear of stigma from within their own communities.

Maighlin Andrew, our clinic co-ordinator, comments: "We remember our patients who have passed away because of AIDS and also celebrate our commitment to preventing future AIDS-related deaths. Our program helps to ensure that those who are homeless and refugees are able to safely obtain their treatment, and as best we can prevent their HIV progressing to AIDS. Many of our patients have AIDS at the time of diagnosis, but with proper treatment we see significant improvements in their medical condition. We continue to be a beacon of hope for many individuals living with HIV/AIDS who are living in the most difficult of situations in our community."

Photo: (Most of) the DHC clinic team in their smart new Jonsson Workwear shirts – ready to fight on the front line of the AIDS epidemic in Durban.



For more information, and to donate from outside South Africa, see:
www.denishurleycentre.org

In accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (4 of 2013) please be aware:
- you can remove yourself from this list at any time by clicking unsubscribe below
- you can request to see what information we are holding about you by contacting Leanne Banks (leanne@denishurleycentre.org)
- by responding to this communication, you are consenting to us processing and using any personal information provided

Sent by
[SendinBlue]

You received this email because you are registered with DenisHurleyCentre

[Unsubscribe here](#)

Sent by

