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UPDATE

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October 2024

Wishing Diwali blessings to our Hindu readers

Durban Leadership Forum at the DHC
Preparing for National Homeless Conversation
Collaboration with DUT on Training
Talking about Paddy and +Hurley



**The Homeless
find their voice**



**Have we set up
a morgue?**



**In conversation
in Ballito**

INFLUENCING FUTURE LEADERS IN SOCIETY

The Masojada family have been great supporters of the Denis Hurley Centre through volunteering and in other practical ways. Here Janina Masojada and husband Bruce Robertson explain about a recent workshop they held at the DHC:

The Durban Leadership Forum comprises 27 people of influence within the city, from the areas of business, government, NGOs, media and the arts.

Part of the programme is a place-as-text experience in which the forum visits an area in the city they might know about but are unlikely to have seen recently. The place is used as a catalyst to prompt conversations about the challenges and opportunities of the city.

The Denis Hurley Centre was particularly suitable as a place-as-text destination. Led through what they termed the 'soul of the city' – the mosque, the cathedral, the feeding programme and the clinic – the expert guides wove together a heartwarming story about a caring core, nurturing a city of hope.

The visit made a great impression on the Leadership Forum participants, introducing them to stories of transformation through conversations with previously homeless people who had worked their way into productive jobs with the help of the DHC.

This prompted discussions across business, government and community-based organisations on how to work together, across the divides, to build our city into a caring place, in which all citizens feel they have a place. Many were astonished at the impact of the DHC, and at how effective a well-thought-through programme can be. It reconnected the Forum fellows to the core of their city and will have an impact on their actions in the future.

We were especially pleased that Eric Makalo, our bookseller at Botanic Gardens, took time out of a busy selling Saturday to share his personal story. He described how tough it was when he found himself unemployed in Durban and living on the streets and then the way in which the DHC had been a lifeline for him. Becoming part of the bookselling programme had shown him that turning his life around was possible and he proudly described how he now had a thriving business and an apprentice whom he is training.

In addition, our Director Raymond talked about his own journey of leadership from running a marketing agency in New York in his mid 30s, through 6 years of training as a Jesuit, to now the last 10 years at the DHC. He described the importance of being passionate about what you do and inspiring that passion in others. We are delighted that so many of the rising leaders in the group have already reached out to the DHC to explore ways that they can work with us to address some of the challenges we face.

Photo: Eric Makalo, a Street Lit bookseller, addressing the Leadership Forum.



HELPING THE VOICELESS FIND THEIR VOICE

As well as Eric, who is an established public speaker, participating in the above initiative were also some of the trainees from the 'Find your Voice' programme that we are now running.

This inspiring initiative is aimed at empowering our homeless community members through public speaking. Over the next few weeks, several dozen have committed to four weekly sessions on communication skills. Some are regulars who come to our Nkosinathi kitchen every day, others have been recommended to us from the Safe Open Sleeping Spaces, and others are younger people brought to the programme by our partners at iCare.

Led by our very own empowerment officer, Stuart Talbot, along with social work interns, these sessions are designed to help participants overcome their fears and anxieties about speaking in front of strangers. The training covers everything from structuring and planning a speech, to delivering it confidently. For many in the group, this is their first experience speaking to an audience of more than just one or two, in some cases as many as 50 people!

Working in groups and receiving continuous practice and feedback, these individuals are developing into powerful advocates for the homeless community. They are particularly being prepared to share their lived experience of being homeless at the upcoming National Homeless Conversation. This will be the 8th such annual meeting and the National Homeless Network always take pains to make sure that the voices of homeless people themselves are part of the conversation. The meeting is open to anyone who is concerned about the issue and will be hosted by the Durban Homeless Forum at the DHC on 18-20 November. (Click here to register – for more details, the agenda of the event is attached).

'Find Your Voice' was building on the experience of hosting the Poetry Africa Festival, organised by UKZN's Centre for Creative Arts. For the second year in a row, they came to us on World Homeless Day (10/10). The visiting poet was Lethu Nkwanana the 2023 African Slam Poetry Champion (*pictured at the top*). He shared some of his own works and then encouraged members of the audience, mostly homeless people, to take the microphone and share their own poetry in English and in Zulu.

We are incredibly proud of the progress the participants are making and look forward to seeing them stand up and speak out for themselves and others. Come and see for yourself at the National Conversation in less than three weeks.

Photo: Stuart using a trust circle as part of the training in communications.



CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR CLINIC TEAM

Every week, as part of the rhythm of the clinic, one of our volunteer doctors, Dr Stephen Carpenter conducts a short in-service training for the team. But we are pleased that this quarter we are able to expand this with a more structured programme in partnership with DUT's Health Sciences team.

The Durban University of Technology and the DHC have partnered on various projects over the last decade. The latest of such initiatives seeks to upskill staff at our Usizo Lwethu Afrisun Clinic which is serving Durban's vulnerable inner-city population.

This project was born from a brainstorming session between Raymond, Thobile (the Clinic Co-ordinator) and DUT staff members, Dr Jennifer Ducray and Dr Colette Kell. A tailored training programme to develop the DHC Community Health Workers (and other clinic staff) was selected as a suitable focus for 2024.

Jenny explains: "Training needs were identified through a consultative process with both clinic management and staff. A twelve-week programme has been developed to address the needs and includes topics such as wound care; medical waste disposal; infection control; soft tissue injuries; fracture management; CPR; and health literacy. In addition to training, project funding from the DUT Community Engagement office was utilised to print Health promotion books and visual aids; and to supplement the wound care supplies of the clinic. The programme in fact won a cash prize from DUT as part of the Institutional Community Engagement Pitching and Showcasing Awards for 2024."

The project is currently underway, with sessions consisting of a combination of theoretical formation and practical application exercises facilitated by DUT subject specialists. Participating departments from the DUT Faculty of Health Sciences are Basic Medical Sciences, Nursing, and Emergency Medical Care. The latter provided training in CPR and for this session other frontline members of the DHC team also participated.

Collette commented: "DUT staff and students alike have been deeply impressed by the DHC staff, who have proven to be not only enthusiastic and diligent participants in the weekly training, but also humble community servants. It has been a privilege to witness their courage, dedication, and compassion in tackling the challenging issues on the ground. As the year draws to a close, we will evaluate the success of the project, assess sustainability, and plan for future projects of a similar nature. This initiative would not have been possible without the support of the management and staff of the DHC, together with their deep commitment to serving the marginalised. It is our hope that this project further equips them for this vital work."

Many thanks to DUT for their assistance with this and other aspects of our work. For example, their homeopathy department continues to offer a free drop-in clinic at the DHC every Friday.

Photo: Members of the DHC clinic team in training for CPR with DUT faculty.



INSPIRING OTHERS WITH TALKS ABOUT PADDY AND +HURLEY

The publication of Raymond's book about our founder Paddy Kearney continues to provide opportunities to talk about Paddy, and Archbishop Hurley, and offer their lives as an inspiration for others. The book is available to buy online (if you live in South Africa); if you wish to buy the book but live in other parts of the world email here. The publisher Anivesh Singh is very pleased that the first print run has almost sold out.

For example, Raymond was recently invited to preach at the Anglican churches of St Martin's and St Margaret's in Durban North. Our long-standing partner, the Iqraa Trust also invited Raymond to address their staff team. Director, Dr Abu Baker was proud to show the photograph of him from 2010 handing over the very first large cheque for the DHC to Cardinal Napier.

One lovely event was held at the Ballito Lifestyle Centre who have generously fitted out a complete bookshop for one of our Street Lit vendors. They hosted Raymond and Fr Stephen Tully, 'in conversation' about Paddy (*pictured at the top*). Fr Stephen worked very closely with Paddy and now is chair of our sister organisation the Napier Centre 4 Healing which provides a very successful medium-term residential rehabilitation programme for street-dwelling drug users. The two shared memories of Paddy and were in agreement that perseverance was one of the characteristics learnt from him: "That is why they called him the woodpecker," said Fr Stephen.

Raymond also gave a half-day of reflection to the 240 students at St Joseph's Theological Institute, Cedara (just outside Pietermaritzburg). This is very close to our heart since its foundation stone was laid in 1951 by Bishop Hurley on the day he discovered he was to be an Archbishop; the library at SJTI is named in his honour; and his personal archive (and now Paddy's) are housed there. Raymond was pleased to present the library with a copy not only of his book but also of his full PhD dissertation to be available to future students.

Whilst SJTI was initially the successor to the Oblate Scholasticate in PMB (where the young Fr Hurley was once director), it is now home to students from 12 men's and 3 women's religious congregations who are in formation to be priests, brothers and sisters. What is more, it is hugely international with students from 23 countries across Africa as well as one each from Peru and The Philippines!

It is interesting to hear the feedback from the students themselves:

- Lehlohonolo Bernet Boleke, an OMI student from South Africa: "Archbishop Hurley was tall, outspoken and eloquent in speech. He was ahead of his time on both the reforms needed in the Catholic Church and in his views concerning racial issues of South Africa."
- Isaac Ogwang a member of the Missionaries of Africa from Uganda: "Hurley was God's humble servant and an exemplary leader indeed who walked the talk; he lived and loved with passion what he was doing. What a great example he set to the leaders of this third millennium!"
- Tshaningwa Shivolo, an OMI student from Namibia: "Archbishop Hurley was a visionary leader who saw the Star of Jesus, followed the star and encouraged others to do the same with Oblate zeal and determination. His leadership model is worth emulating and his contribution to the Church both local and universal should not be forgotten."

The students were also encouraged to reflect on their own calling in the light of what they heard about +Hurley and Paddy.

- Siphon Mukoloba an OMI student from Zambia commented: "I believe we're all called for a purpose, and Archbishop Hurley and Paddy were the kind of leaders who enabled others to recognise and fulfil their God-given vocation."
- Nobila Gregoire Gouba also an M.Afr., from Burkina Faso, added: "When we are conscious of what is non-negotiable for us, we can be flexible for other stuff."

We are grateful to Fr Patrick Aleke, the Dean of SJTI (who delivered the 2023 Hurley-Gabuza lecture) for giving us the opportunity to deepen the students' understanding of leadership in the church and how they are being called to exercise leadership themselves. We pray for all those men and women who are in formation for church leadership that they will be inspired by the example of a bishop like Hurley and a lay person like Paddy.

Photo: The Decock lecture hall was full to overflowing – Fr Paul Decock can be seen at the front of the photo, one of the Oblates at SJTI who personally worked with +Hurley.



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