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UPDATE

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February 2024

*Blessings to those already marking Lent,
and to those about to start Ramadan*

Remembering +Hurley 20 years after his death
The DHC reports back in its 10th year
Winners of the Barry Wood Awards
7th National Homeless Conversation



**Painting a block
at this year's
AGM**



**Awards for
Outstanding
Service**



**Animated
discussions
about politics**

20 YEARS SINCE THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP HURLEY

It has been a profound month for us at the DHC as we marked 20 years since the passing of Archbishop Hurley who died on 13 February 2004.

He was almost 90 when he died and his life spanned a century of significant history for the world, for South Africa and for the Church. When he was born in 1915, the First World War was in full flight; he lived through the Second World War – having rushed to finish his priestly studies in Rome so he could get out of Fascist Italy; and he lived to see the end of the Cold War and the start of the wave of terrorism that has beset the 21st century. In South African terms, his birth happened soon after the first legislation that

restricted the rights of non-white citizens; he became bishop in 1947 just before the election of the Nationalist Party; and he retired as archbishop in 1992 on the eve of the first democratic elections for which he had fought so hard.

In Church terms, he was born into a Church which had just condemned what it saw as the threat of modernism; he matured as a young priest and a very young bishop as the Church embraced new theologies and reached out to other Christians and other faiths; and then after Vatican II +Hurley spent the last 40 years of his life shaping a Church that was very definitely 'in the modern world'.

His life is a useful lens through which to see the movements of the 20th century; the timeline in our museum at the DHC lays this out very clearly.

The 20 years since his death have also been momentous for the world, for South Africa and for the Church – in some ways progressive causes for which +Hurley fought have been set back; many of the promises of liberation at the turn of the millennium have been slow to be realised.

The weekend before his death anniversary, with the gracious permission of Archbishop Jwara, special Masses were held in +Hurley's memory at Emmanuel Cathedral Durban and prayers said at his shrine (since, as is usual for bishops, he is buried in the cathedral which was once his). The guest preacher was Fr Mike Lewis SJ who, as a young priest, had worked in this archdiocese in Elandsdorp and who went on to be the convenor of all the Jesuit provincials of Africa.

Fr Mike recalled the care that +Hurley took, making time to visit parishes (often unannounced) and listen to the problems faced by him as a young priest and offer pastoral solutions. He remembered how +Hurley managed to combine his huge national role in the struggle against Apartheid and his international role in modernising the Church, with a care for the local and the personal: "He always made the person he was speaking to feel as if they were the most important person in the world – just as Jesus did." Fr Mike drew a comparison between how Jesus treated the leper in the Gospel for that Sunday (Mk 1:40-45), Hurley's care for individuals, and the care for the most marginalised shown at the centre that carries his name.

An article celebrating +Hurley's model of leadership appeared in 'The Mercury' on the day of his death anniversary: [click here to read](#).

Photo (Rolan Gulston): some of those taking part in the candlelit procession at Emmanuel Cathedral before prayers were said and wreaths laid at +Hurley's shrine.



10 YEARS OF SERVICE TO DURBAN

The foundation stone of the DHC was laid by Cardinal Napier on the 10th anniversary of +Hurley's death and so – although we did not move into the building until December

2014 – this month does mark 10 years of our building being a beacon amid the challenges of our city centre. +Hurley's father had been a lighthouse keeper (including on Robben Island where the young Denis first went to school) and following this theme Alan Paton had called the Archbishop 'The Guardian of the Light'. That is the name that Paddy Kearney gave to his biography of +Hurley and he perhaps intentionally modelled the DHC to be like a lighthouse in the city.

Our foundation stone has the Scripture quotation John 10:10: "I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness". So, as part of the Annual Stakeholders Meeting, our Director reviewed the work of the DHC over the last 12 months exploring the idea of 'life in all its fullness'. He used the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to explain how the DHC assists people, starting with their most basic physiological needs – 169,000 meals served last year, 8,000 showers and laundry for 600 people as well as handouts of clothing and blankets with some of our church partners.

The next level of need (for health and safety) is addressed by our clinic which had almost 18,000 patient interactions and over 10,000 daily observed treatment sessions to ensure that patients with HIV and TB stay on their medication. The next levels – the need for belonging, for esteem and for learning – are addressed through our crèche at Dalton (where children living in absolute squalor have the chance to be educated with dignity), through our projects that help people become politically and economically empowered, and through partnerships with organisations that offer vocational training. Moreover, we provide opportunities for belonging, for esteem and for learning to our staff members and volunteers.

The top of the pyramid addresses aesthetic needs, self-actualisation and transcendence: and we hope that we also respond to those needs through our links with performing artists, our programmes of personal development and our religious and spiritual acts. Raymond concluded by suggesting that the Meal of Reconciliation is such an iconic event for us since it actually addresses all the needs of the pyramid at the same time.

The meeting also included musical entertainment from Lisa Bobbert and a chance for people to 'paint a square' reflecting how they feel about the DHC (example above).

The presentation can be viewed and heard (in two chunks of 20 mins each) via this [YouTube link](#). It also contains feedback on our financial position and some of our plans for 2024. The attached document contains a written summary report on the year. If, having reviewed these, you have any questions or concerns, feel free to [email the Director](#). We are happy to be as transparent as we can be about how we raise funds, how we spend them and how we remain accountable.

Photo (Rolan Gulston): A Q&A session at the Annual Stakeholders Meeting: our director, flanked by Trustee Prof Jairam Reddy and Chair of the Trust Rev Dr Delysia Timm.



RECOGNITION FOR THOSE WHO HELP US DELIVER OUR SERVICES

As part of the presentation, a long list was presented of all the many partners who work with the DHC and enable us to do so much. This is shown in the attached and we were delighted that representatives of a number of our partners were there on the day so they could be thanked in person.

We were also able to name and thank our staff members and long-term volunteers and particularly recognise a few of them through our annual Barry Wood Awards. These are named after the late auxiliary Bishop of Durban who was very close to the DHC and who shared so many of our values. Since his untimely death in 2017, we have annually made awards for Outstanding Service by Volunteers and Staff Members. 35 people submitted nominations – staff members, volunteers, supporters and service users – and the nominations were reviewed by the Director and two Trustees.

In the volunteer category, we were hard pressed to choose between the candidates. Runners up were Rose Boulle who helps in the kitchen and Simphiwe Khoza one of several homeless volunteers. The award, and a gift voucher, was given to Sandile Dlamini who has continued volunteering in the clinic since he finished his studies rather than remain idle at home.

In the staff category, runners up included two people who both started as interns, then stayed on as volunteers, and then proved themselves sufficiently that they were offered paid positions, both as social work auxiliaries. One is Makhosi Mkhize who assists in the DOTS room in the clinic; the other is Zama Mthimkhulu who works as part of the Nkosinathi team welcoming homeless people who come for lunch and helping them access a wider range of services.

The winner was in fact not a DHC staff member but someone from the Victoria Market cleaning team who do such a great job at keeping our building so spotless. Xolani Buthelezi is one of the three cleaners who work in rotation around our building and was especially recognised by his peers for his lovely smile, his warm personality and his hard work. During working hours, he is never idle but always looking for things to do and willing to help with whatever he is asked. He was commended by one person for his 'listening ear and helping hand'.

The Barry Wood Awards were presented by Fr Zibonele Ngubane who, like +Barry and +Hurley, is a member of the order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and has been a Trustee of the DHC for the last five years.

Photo: Xolani Buthelezi missed the award ceremony (it was his day off!) and so he received his prize from Maighlin Andrews at our morning prayers (clearly, on Ash Wednesday!).



80 PEOPLE ALL PASSIONATE ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

The 7th National Conversation about Homelessness took place this month on the East Rand of Johannesburg, the first time that Ekurhuleni has hosted the meeting. Over 80 people attended from seven different municipalities: NGO workers, pastors, academics, researchers, government officials and people who have a lived experience of homelessness.

The National Homeless Network, of which the DHC is a founding member, holds these annual meetings to give people a chance to share promising practices from around the country, to network with like-minded organisations, and to chart a wider national course for the issue of homelessness in South Africa.

As is usual, the first day was spent travelling round the area, visiting different NGOs to see at first hand what they are doing. All were very impressed to see Aruka in Boksburg, a shelter not just for single people but which also accommodates mothers with children and indeed whole families. They and two other sites – Siyabonga Africa and MES Kempton Park – had interesting models for economic empowerment as did our hosts for the main part of the conference, Manger Care in Benoni. Among these we saw models of agriculture, baking bread, tailoring, tyre repair and contract work, all of which have enabled homeless people to turn their lives around and get back in the mainstream.

Sharing practical examples of livelihood programmes was a big part of the meeting and our Street Lit project of homeless booksellers was one of the ones featured. Two of our booksellers, Xolani Gamede and Qhawe Mbatha, had travelled up to take part in the meeting – and they also brought along some books to sell, to the delight of many other participants.

The traditional presentations from around the country brought home once again how much the response to homelessness varies between municipalities. This further reinforced the importance of the planned Green Paper from DSD which was also discussed at the meeting. The delegates were encouraged to envision what such a National Homeless Policy might look like and brainstorm what Government should do more of and also what it should stop doing because some practices actually harm homeless people.

With the election date announced as the meeting began, we were well timed to have a session on what should be in our National Homeless Manifesto. Good advice was given to the group by Gushwell Brooks, a local media commentator, formerly working with the Human Rights Commission, and now head of the Mandela Day event at the Nelson Mandela Foundation. He urged all of us to keep looking for the levers of influence that we do have – rather than worry about what we don't have – and to keep political demands clear and actionable.

At the end of an intense three days, all came away inspired by what they had seen and learnt and re-committed to working together to respond to the growing problem of homelessness.

Photo: Enjoying a visit to a bakery project are the Durban delegation which included three of our managers – Cathy Murugan, Stuart Talbot and Thobile Mthembu – as well as Simphiwe Khoza (second from left) and three other homeless people. Also present from Durban were Dave Richter from Grace Aid, Jennifer Fisher from Payless Shelter and our director.



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