

Second Edition, 2024 | Vol. II No.39

# The Franciscan

Anglican Parish of St Francis Parkview

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## RECTORS REFLECTIONS

# A ROOM WITH A VIEW

**“IF THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION WERE CLEANSED EVERYTHING WOULD APPEAR TO MAN [PEOPLE] AS IT IS, INFINITE.”**

**WILLIAM BLAKE**

As most of you know, I recently spent 3 days in hospital. Like most hospitals, it too has a “bland” face: the wards, passages, bedding, and so on, are the usual non-descript antiseptic expressions of a medical facility. For many, hospitals, whilst intended to be places of healing and restoration, can also carry associations of pain, suffering, sadness and loneliness.

But the truth is that midst the seeming genericness of location, resources, experiences, and so on, there are the moving particularities of each person’s story!

In a 4 bed ward, I had the privilege of having one person with me for 12 of my waking hours and another person at a different time for 4 of my waking hours. The rest of the time I was in this space on my own, but not lonely, rather it became a visceral experience of deep sanctification.

The first patient I encountered was an exceptional, humane being. After basic greetings we quite naturally sank into an in-depth, meaningful, very real conversation. This exceptional person’s life in this past year has been patterned by so much pain, loss and suffering and yet she has a strength of soul and a transcendence of spirit which left me aware of being in the presence of tangible holiness. I wish I could share the details of her story because I suspect that, like me, it would strengthen and inspire your faith too.

The other co-patient was a young matric student with a purity of heart which sometimes seems to arise in people who have suffered extensively over a long period of time. This was certainly true in her case. And yet, in the midst of so much trauma, anguish, and disappointed hopes in her life, she could still look beyond herself and touch into the pain of others.

I found this to be breathtakingly humbling. Whilst we were together in the ward, she used what she had, which was a till slip, and made an enchanting origami heart; something which truly is priceless and feels like a piece of her refined, luminous heart.

Two seemingly random people whom I'm unlikely to meet again this side of heaven.

However, on reflection, these encounters felt anything but random. They felt like God-incidences, like holy touchpoints in the microcosmic and macrocosmic Divine Story. We were each no doubt transformed

in some way by the Christ in one another. Without me sharing this story with you, no one else would know about this: not through social media, tabloids, twitter, instagram.

It's not that kind of story, and yet great things were wrought, at least that's how it felt even if nothing could be visible or tangibly shown. It felt like we weren't only connecting in to one another's stories but that our stories were a mirroring of other people's stories and that the way in which we chose to relate to one another would either add redeeming light and love to others' lives or not. Is this part of what God's mysticism in our world manifests as? I hope and believe so.

So this hospital room with a view became not only the gorgeous green trees, clouds, the sweet sound of birds, and windows of an apartment building full of possibilities. This ward briefly became a home of naked hearts and vulnerable souls eternally interwoven with

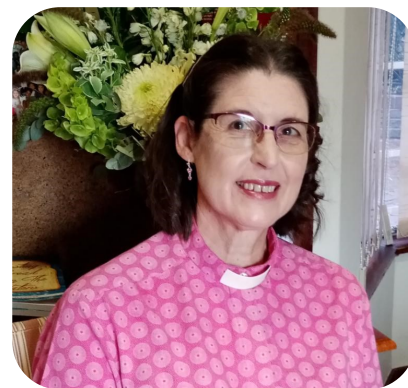
one another, seeing the other as part of one another's great story and as being touched by the finger of God.

I have kept praying for both of these people, to not do so, would feel like a loss that would in some way wound my soul. I know that this sounds melodramatic on one level, but on another level they are now inextricably part of my faith.

**"I TRUST THAT WHEN PEOPLE MEET, WE MEET FOR A TRANSCENDENT REASON, AND THAT THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN LIFE ARE ALWAYS LESSONS THAT SERVE OUR SOUL'S GROWTH."**

**MARIANNE WILLIAMSON**

Michelle Pilet



## PORTABLE ALTAR—SERVING THE LORD WHEREVER WE GO

This beautiful portable altar was made by Tim Gray using the wood of some of St Francis old church pews. The wood grain is beautiful. It will be used for our services in the garden. A very big thank you to Tim.



## REFLECTION

# HOMECOMING AND THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

BY DIANA LAWRENSEN

Retreats are good. They offer a change of rhythm and they care for your soul. You open yourself up, entrust yourself to God and show up with a mixture of trepidation and anticipation. I haven't been on a retreat which hasn't offered insight, grace and a deep sense that God has been present. Often what emerges is not what was expected but it is always what is needed and it's timing is just right.

With this in mind, one of the things Terence and I did during our time away was go on retreat. The retreat was entitled, **The Second Half of Life: A Journey from Success to Significance**. It wasn't only our age that attracted us to the title but a deep sense of knowing that God will always be in what is significant. Father Hugh Lagan from Northern Ireland led the retreat hosted by the Mater Dei Retreat Centre in Mokopane. As both a priest and clinical psychologist, Hugh's insights were anchored in a deep understanding of God's grace, human seeking and the desire for love and meaning in all of us. One of the guiding quotes was St Augustine's words, "You made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

### THESE WERE SOME SIGNIFICANT REALISATIONS ABOUT THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE:

- It has nothing to do with chronological age – there are young people who through a profound experience of love or suffering, come to realise meaning and purpose are rooted in knowing we are not in control, surrender brings freedom and it is not about what we have but by faith who we are that



matters. Jesus was a Second half of life person.

- Embracing our brokenness is helpful...Carl Jung says, "The first half of life is devoted to forming a healthy ego, the second half is going inward and letting go of it."
- Exhaustion is often the doorway to truth. We come to the second half of life realising that things need to be different. We also come with humility and a profound sense that truth and homecoming await. It's almost as if we have been wandering around, with God and others for company, but now our wandering circles back and God is there welcoming us to this place we recognise but now know differently.
- There will always be uncertainty on this journey. Answering questions like these honestly is a risky business:
  - Is it possible I am being summoned from some deep and holy place within? Am I being asked to dismantle old masks and patterns and unfold a deeper more authentic self- the one God created me to be? Am I being asked in the spiritual life to make a journey from

the false self to true self?

- Emily Dickinson said, “ Not knowing when dawn will come, I open every window.” The second half of life holds greater freedom and a willingness to trust God in all that follows. It is about allowing God to really find, love and accept you.
- Patience is essential on this journey. Many realisations come slowly. This is okay. We start where we are and know just being present and honouring these thoughts, God awaits

St Augustine, who wrestled with conversion and his relationship with God for most of his life writes from a second half of life perspective when *he* addresses God, “You were within and I was without. You were with me. But I was not with you. So, you called, you shouted, you broke through my deafness, you flared, blazed and banished my blindness, you lavished your fragrance, and I gasped.”



If you are interested in the call of the second half of life, Richard Rohr has written a book about it called **Falling Upward**. It is available with a companion journal. Here is a link to one of his talks on the subject <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YngpUoh2AxU>

I would also encourage you to come on our parish retreat in October at **Golden Gate from the 11th – 13th of October 2024**. My experience tells me all retreats hold the capacity to connect us with God, our purpose and what really matters.

## MANDELA DAY SOCIAL OUTREACH

In honour of Mandela Day, on the 18th of July we offered lunch to our homeless community. We fed about 65 people a hot meal of chicken stew and rice, a glass of cold drink, a slice of cake, an orange and banana. A very special thank you to Mrs Essop for providing the hot meal as well as everyone in our community who supported and donated towards this initiative.



# PILGRIMAGE TO LESOTHO: A JOURNEY OF HEALING, HISTORY, AND FAITH



## BY JAMES MARTIN

In April Revd. James went on a pilgrimage to Lesotho with the men's outreach he attends at Holy Cross, Orlando, with Revd. Theo Khanyile.

The first visit was to a dam close to Maseru to explore the significance of water for healing, especially to be rinsed of one's burdens. Interestingly the authorities have identified and demarcated a few sites on the dam and the river below that are suitably safe for Baptism and immersion.

Then to Thaba Bosiu, the

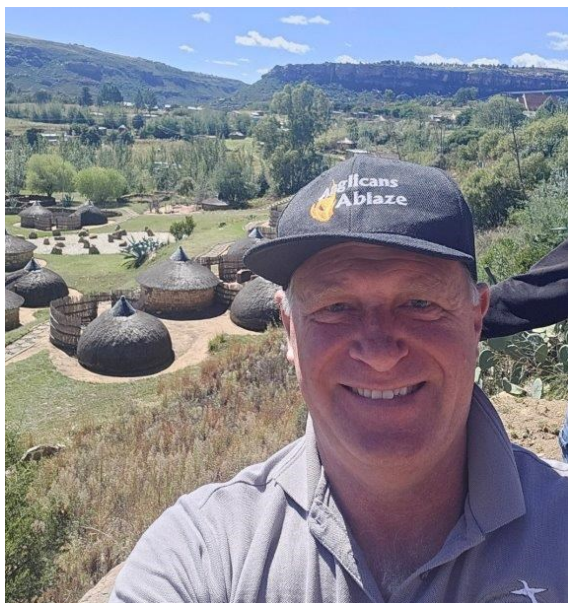
mountain retreat where the nascent Basotho nation fended off colonial and boer attacks; and never being conquered by the British, Lesotho was Protectorate and not a Colony.

Here we considered how we approach the challenging mountain tops in our lives. Indeed Revd Can. Mongezi Guma spoke of the wilderness that exists in each of us. Enroute we visited a small church at the foot of a hill that identifies as a traditional Basotho hat. Typical of many Lesotho churches it was well off

the main road as churches were established to truly serve the community, which were (and remain) rural. The churches also serve as centres for education; indeed the Lutheran, Catholic and Anglican Churches are the mainstay of the schooling system.

Four of the party are ordained, so as visiting clergy we were invited by the Bishop of Lesotho to the memorial of a priest who had died at a young age – this occurred at a beautiful quintessential stone church two hours from Maseru ... the last few kilometres on a 'road' not even worthy to be called a goat track. The Memorial Mass was from 7am and we left around 2pm, with much music and singing. I estimated around 500 people including the Bishop, twenty-eight priests and three deacons. Truly a celebration of life and one's passing.

The highlight was to visit Masiti, the site of the St Barnabas Mission, aptly described as a "beacon of hope" for political refugees and the needy, including such as Arch. Desmond. St Barnabas housed the Sisters of Precious Blood whose mission was continuous twenty-four hours of contemplative prayer - for we

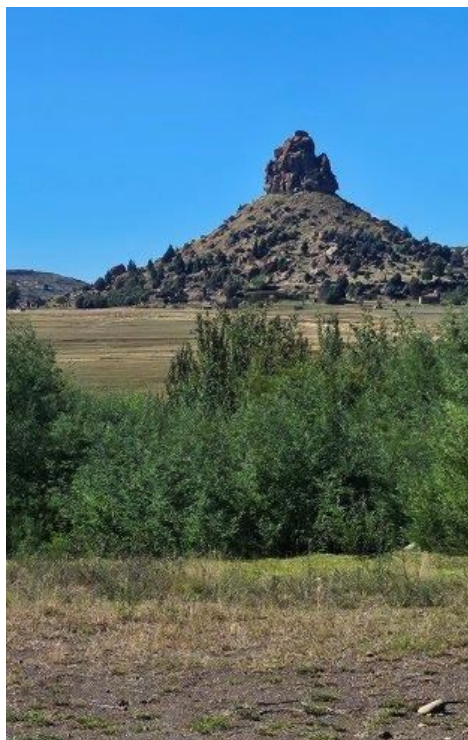
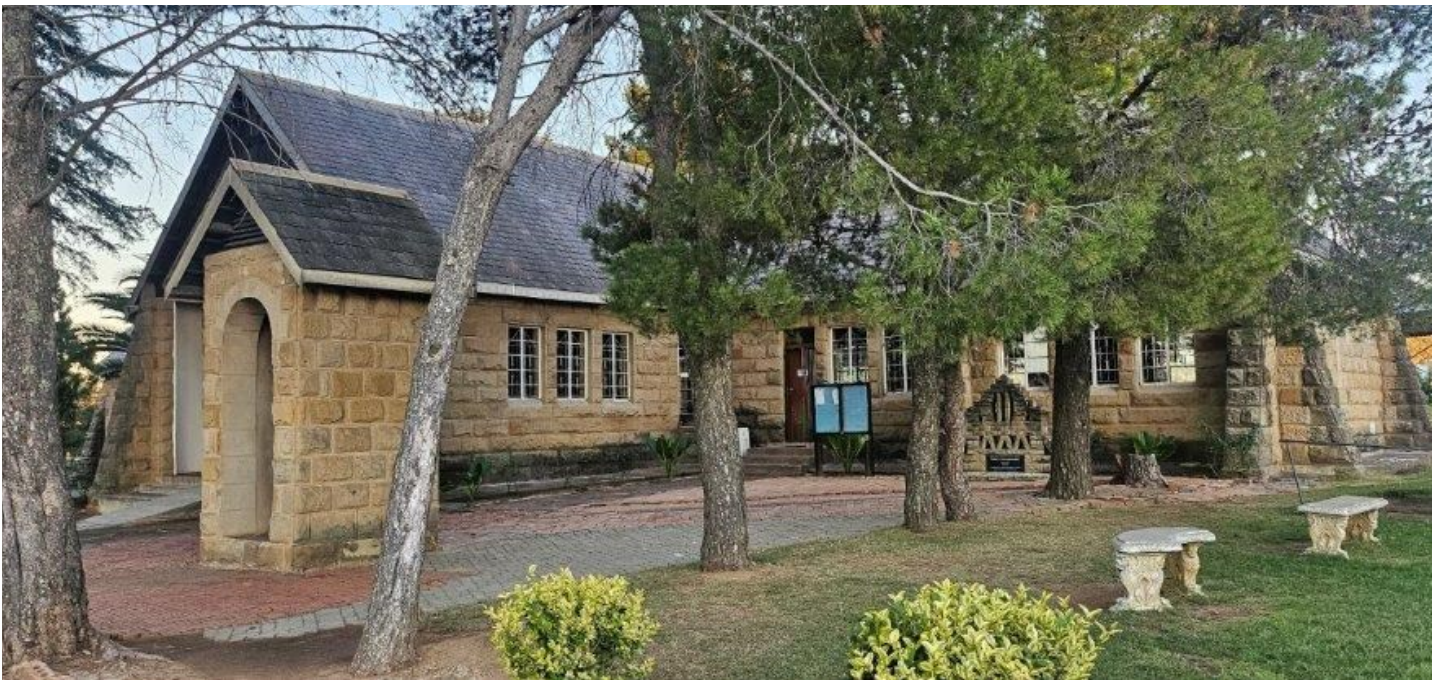


“know not the time” (Matthew 25:13). Also present were the brotherhood of the Society for the Sacred Mission. So this was not so much a centre for activism, but a place of prayer for transformation and healing in finding your peace amidst the challenges we face. And that still resonates today as the Mission is led by the Dean of

the Cathedral. The last evening after the sun had set and as the moon was rising Revd James celebrated Eucharist for the group on the lawns consisting of backpackers where we stayed overlooking a small lake on the outskirts of Maseru.

The next morning we gathered at the Cathedral, a beautiful building of local

Sandstone, and discussed issues men face with a brief presentation by Heartlines, <https://www.heartlines.org.za/wys/church/home>, emphasising the power of recognising and holding the untold stories within all of us. We then concluded with the Bishop leading Eucharist.



# GOLDEN GATE SPIRITUAL RETREAT

11- 13 OCTOBER 2024

**BY JAMES MARTIN**

We have been ‘saving the date’ for the weekend of 11 to 13 October ... and here it is - a weekend in the beauty of God’s creation at the Golden Gate Highlands National Park in the foothills of the Drakensberg near the town of Clarens in the Free State.

The Retreat will be around stillness and walking in the Creation of God.

The venue is the Education Centre, often used by schools and tours – so accommodation is a dormitory with cubicle partitions and communal bathrooms; and you bring along your own bedding and towel. Catering will be provided but you are welcome to bring along your own glass of wine (or two).

And the real glory is to be in the mountains: the basic programme is chats around the boma fire after dinner, structured reflections on



Saturday with a contemplative walk up the Holkrans mountain (well, a berg), and an afternoon to do as you wish – visit the Vulture Hide, view game, or simply wander around the property. Sunday will be a trip to the Cathedral Cave (the name says it all!!!!) where we will celebrate Eucharist.

Meals are covered from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch. Golden Gate is a comfortable four hour drive, and the pretty town of Clarens is yours to visit on the drive up or on return. There will be a pool of transport (such as our trusty Pajero). Cost will be confirmed, but work on the incredibly reasonable R 1 200.00 to R 1 500.00 (excluding travel).

**CONTACT NIKITAH TO BOOK YOUR SPACE  
011646 2660 OR EMAIL AT  
STFRANCIS@STFRANCISPARKVIEW.CO.ZA**

# FINANCE AND ADMIN UPDATE

## BY DARRYL MCMULLEN

In a recent report to council the following account was provided in terms of the finances of the parish.

The parish accounts remain in a satisfactory position.

A review of our first six months of 2024, from the Income Statement view indicates we are in line with budget. But, our income mix is skewed as Dedicated Giving (DG) income continues to remain below budget and below the DG funds received this time last year, by some R42 000. The possibility of a DG drive / campaign is being considered to help increase this

source of income. Donations to the parish remain above budget. This is due mainly to a R100k donation received towards social concerns for which the parish is very grateful.

The expenses are generally in line with budget and well managed.

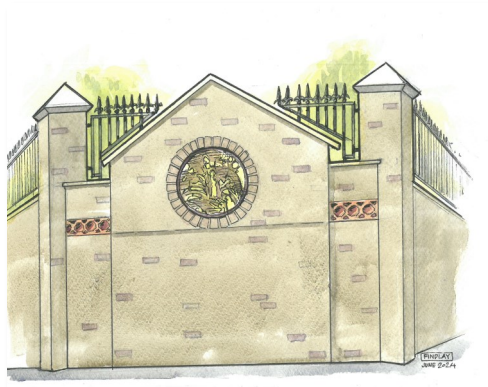
Property maintenance is below budget mainly due to the boundary fencing project which is in the planning stage and has not yet begun. The Parks Joint Plans Committee (JPC) are happy with the plans and drawings the parish has submitted, as prepared by Alastair Findlay ( see below).

Quotes for the work will now be sought and the project started once the necessary funds to be raised are available.

Also non-clergy salary cost are below budget due to an Administrator only being appointed towards the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year.

The Balance sheet remains stable and cash reserves continue to grow. Overall a satisfactory position.

The recent Parish Council noted its sincere gratitude to the parishioners St Francis for their dedicated giving and support of the parish.



Illustrations of the upgrade to the church security by raising the fences as prepared by Alastair Findlay

# DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES

It is with a deep sense of gratitude that we acknowledge and affirm Darryl McMullen's appointment as the Anglican Diocese of Johannesburg's Deputy Bursar, Nigel Carman as a Trustee on the Diocesan Board of Trustees, and Catherine Bell as a delegate the ACSA Provincial Synod. We pray God's wisdom, blessing, integrity and inspiration upon them and the Anglican Church in Southern Africa.

# YOUTH

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES

**BY FABIAN OLIVER**

We thought it would be fun to get to know our 5 confirmation candidates a bit better, so we asked each of them a variety of questions. Here's what they had to say:

### TSHWARELO TRACY SETSHEDI

*Tell us about yourself (age, school, grade, where you stay)?*

My name is Tshwarelo Tracy Setshedi. I am 16 years old, currently in grade 11 at Cosmo City Secondary School and I am situated in Cosmo City with my family.

*How would you describe yourself in two sentences?*

I am an ambitious young lady who overlooks everything negative that happens in my life. I am powerful, patient and a crazy person. Once you get to know me, you will be amazed!

*How has your confirmation journey been thus far?*

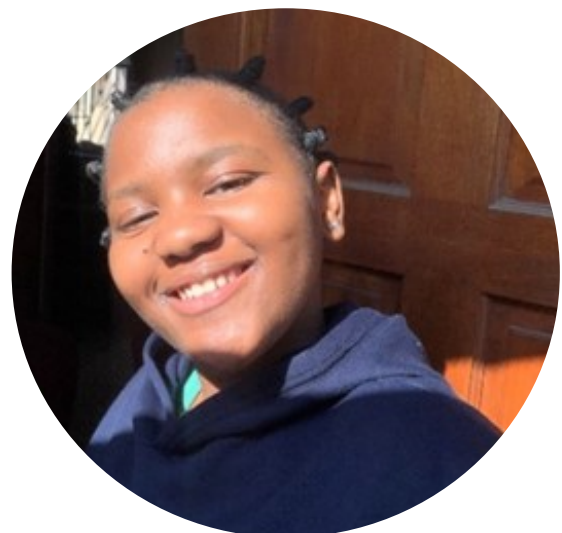
My confirmation journey has been quite challenging and educational. It is the one big component in my life that challenges my ability to think about my life from a religious perspective. I hadn't thought of it to that extent nevertheless it has been a very interesting and informative journey so far.

*If you could be granted 2 wishes (like Aladdin and Genie), what would you wish for?*

My first wish would be inner peace and for the second one I would wish to have a greater understanding and relationship with God.

*In your own words, complete the sentence: Love is...*

Love is the greatest form of friendship; it is the understanding between two ideal individuals willing to let themselves go and attach to this one big thing called love, it's weird yet very influential.



## LESEDI ALAGBAOSO

### *Tell us about yourself*

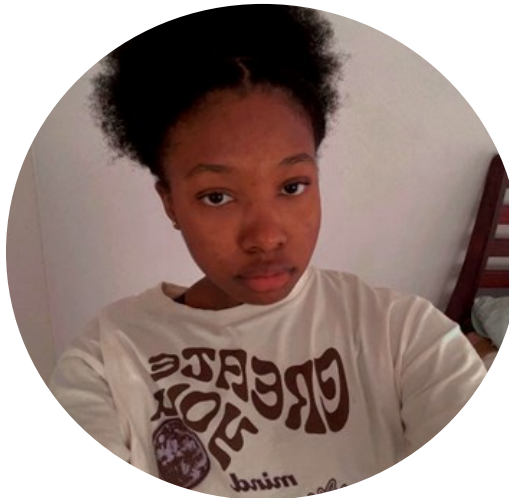
My name is Lesedi Alagbaoso. I am 18 years old and currently studying audiology at Wits University. My mom and dad, 3 sisters and I live in Parkview.

### *How would you describe yourself in two sentences?*

I would say I'm a very bubbly and outgoing person. I always strive to do my best in all aspects of my life, with the amazing support of my family

### *How has your confirmation journey been thus far?*

My confirmation journey has been very



interesting thus far. I've learnt a lot about myself, my faith and my fellow confirmands.

### *If Jesus were to return today, what do you think he would tell us? Where would he go?*

If Jesus were to return today, he might simply tell us to love one another and seek peace. He would likely go wherever people are suffering and in need of hope and compassion.

### *In your own words, complete the sentence: True beauty*

*is...*

True beauty is found in sincerity and authenticity. It is found in a genuine hug and the warmth of a kind heart.



## NALEDI ALAGBAOSO

### *Tell us about yourself*

My name is Naledi Alagbaoso. I'm 21 years old, studying Aeronautical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand. I live in Parkview.

### *How would you describe yourself in two sentences?*

I am a dedicated and compassionate individual

who strives to make a positive impact on those around me. My faith and values guide my actions, and I continuously seek opportunities for personal growth and service to others.

### *How has your confirmation journey been thus far?*

It's been such an eye-opening experience for me. I have learnt so much from our lessons so far and I've enjoyed engaging with Pastor Fabian and the other confirmands.

### *If you were given 1 billion rand, what would you do with it?*

I would aim to balance enjoying the wealth, securing long-term financial stability, and making a positive impact on society.

### *In your own words, complete the sentence; We are who we are because...*

We are who we are because of our faith, the guidance we receive from our community, the lessons we learn from our experiences, and the values instilled in us by our families and mentors.

## LAURA SHIRIYAPENGA

### *Tell us about yourself*

My Name is Laura Shiryapenga, I'm 16 years old. I am an only child and I live with my mother in Waverly. I am currently attending Grade 10 at Parktown High School for Girls.

### *How would you describe yourself in two sentences?*

I am empathetic and usually optimistic (but an overthinker always). I love reading and learning about people and history.

### *How has your confirmation journey been thus far?*

Confirmation has opened my eyes to the fact that I barely know my own religion. I have learned to understand the Bible readings in context, and everything made so much sense after that one lesson. Discussions with fellow confirmands have made me more open minded as we all have partial truths in our diverse views on Christianity. We have also grown closer through these discussions.

### *If you could change one thing in the world immediately, what would it be? Why?*

I would grant every human being the courage to always speak against the injustices and socially-irresponsible elite members (that easily manipulate our governments and economy) of society. I think our fight against all injustices is a deep part of the solution to many of the world's biggest struggles.



## EUAN STEIN

### *Tell us about yourself*

My name is Euan Stein. I go to Parktown Boys High School and I live in a family of 5, with one older brother, and we stay on Parkhurst.

### *How has your confirmation journey been thus far?*

Very insightful and I believe that I have grown as a person. I have learnt much about my faith and myself and am grateful that I decided to get confirmed.

### *If you could have one superpower, what would it be? Why?*

Time control: that way I would have more time to get things done

### *In your own words, complete the sentence: Life is...*

Life is and will always be only what you make of it (if you decide to take everything negatively your life will be the same. If you choose to be positive, humble and willing to learn, your life will reflect this positivity mentors.

# MARANG HOUSE PROJECT

**BY FABIAN OLIVER**

In Setswana, the word, “Marang”, loosely means “sun-rays” or “igniting light of hope.” This word and its deep meaning are exemplary in the work we are called to do as Christians. Ours is the work of witnessing the splendour of God’s light which shines from within each person. It is to be a

light to others who have found themselves in a dark moment of life. Light means hope, warmth, life, and we all carry this within us. How amazing!

I would like to thank every person that contributed to the Marang House Project. Our works of love, peace, and justice remain ongoing and steadfast.



Sr. Salome Parkies the house mother gladly received the gifts from the St Francis handed over by Pastor Fabian.

Some of the children from Marang House enjoy a meal together



## WELCOME TO BABY LUCAH

We are delighted to announce the joyous arrival of Lucah Botha, born on June 10, 2024, a date made even more special as it also marks his mother Jodie Botha’s birthday. Our heartfelt congratulations to the proud parents, Jodie Botha and Pravir Jagath. May Lucah’s life be filled with love, joy, and the abundant grace of God.

# FRANK CLARKE

BY JAMES MARTIN

In follow up to the last magazine's article on the past Rector of St Francis, Frank Clarke, where I had come across him as he is interred at the church I occasionally visit and lead Communion in the Waterberg, I had a most beautiful responses and would like to hare them here:

Catherine Mac Kinnon (Stretton) writes: Dear Revd James Martin, I read your article and want to point out, the length of his service at St. Frances stretched from 1953 to 1972.

He was the only boy of a family of eight girls. I saw his photograph in St. Dunstan's Benoni in a line up of previous serving clergy. I am sure Canon Cranswick was there too. He was

Frank Clark's predecessor at St. Francis. I also saw a photo of Revd Ram who served in St. Francis in the 1940's. His name is on my Baptism Certificate. I cannot remember if it was at St. Dunstan's Benoni or St. Boniface in Germiston. I know Revd Godfrey Henwood had his initiation period at St. Michael's Boksburg.

The death of Elizabeth Clark was deeply felt by the entire Parish and a fund was launched to put in a stained glass window (The Resurrection window), I think it was, in Memoriam. This involved many a cake sale at the time. She had been killed at a level crossing accident, near her farm in the Waterberg, to which she was forever returning. Familiarity led to carelessness. There were many of these accidents then.

Revd Clark took myself and a large number of young teenagers through confirmation in 1956. His instruction was very powerful and memorable. I remember him telling us that as a young boy living near Thames Police Station, he thought the Our Father prayer petitioned as "Lead us not into Thames Station".



Just as an aside, the Ramsden Hall was a beautiful little building of brick, just in line with the architecture of the time. I wonder if anyone photographed it. What a sad loss that it had to make way for extensions of the courtyard and the Frank Clark Hall. The tinies used it for Sunday School and Valerie Herbert taught us there.

I thank you for the memories you triggered.

Revd Susan remembers Revd Frank as she was a young mother at the time, and yet to be called to the permanent Diaconate,

Revd Diana recalls that she was taught Geography at school by Revd Frank's daughter. Indeed, his commitment to St Francis is reflected in the plaque opposite the office dedicate to the St Francis Administration extensions.



# REMEMBERING AMANDA VAN RYNEVELD

We remember Amanda Van Ryneveld who sadly passed away on 23 July 2024. Amanda was part of our community for over 70 years. She was involved in many aspects of parish life such as church council, Anglicare, marriage preparation and social concerns. Her paintings are in our Assisi Room and her knitting contributed to the BabyBox project for years. She will be missed as a friend and mentor to many. We give thanks for her long, faithful and meaningful life. She has surely risen in glory! We pray for her daughter Debbie, her son Bruce and their families, her carer Beatrice, as well as all her many friends.



# BLANKETS OF HOPE: SUPPORTING THOSE IN NEED



In the months of May and June, Joanne Speedy was busy at work making blankets for those in need. She very kindly made some and delivered them to June's Haven, the children and Staff of Marang House and for the boys at Abraham Kriel Children's Home in Fontainebleau, Randburg.



# SEEN *and* HEARD

## ST FRANCIS GETS A JOJO TANK

A back up 2050 litre Eco water tank has been installed in the store room of the church. This was agreed to at the Parish Vestry meeting held in March 2024. A very big thank you to all the parishioners who contributed to the cost of the tank and the installation.



## ACCIDENTAL FIRE AT ST FRANCIS

In the early hours of Sunday 21st July, our caretaker, Isaac woke to the smell of rubber burning. On investigation, he found that the four plastic bins which stood on the side of the church, outside the Lady Chapel, were burning. He acted very quickly and put out the fire. An insurance claim has been submitted and repairs will soon take place. Of concern is the damage to the two stained glass windows and enquires will be made with stain glassed window experts.

## LICENSING OF PARISH COUNCIL

On the 9th of June, the Ven Michelle licensed the parish council members of St Francis and St Thomas at a service held at St Francis Parkview. This is in line with the clustering of parishes to assist each other and our commitment to assist St. Thomas during their period without a priest.

