

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TERTIARY STUDENTS



**ACTS NATIONAL CONFERENCE
MARIA TROST LYDENBURG
JULY 2008**

***“African Culture as a Gateway to Develop our
Catholic Heritage”***

IMCS

International Movement of Catholic Students

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**FIFTEENTH ACTS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE
MARIA TROST LYDENBURG JULY 2008
“African Culture as a Gateway to Develop our Catholic Heritage”**

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	
	30 June	01 July	02 July	03 July	
07h30 – 08h00		Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	
08h00-09h00		Breakfast			
09h00-10h00		*March in Lydenburg Opening Mass: Bishop Khumalo *NEC Welcome *National Chaplain’s Address *Greetings 1 IMCS Pan Africa 2 Botswana	<u>Mass – Year of St Paul</u> <u>Study Session 3:</u> Evangelisation and Testimonies from the students Provincial Reports	Exposure Visit	
10h00-11h00					
11h00-11h30					
11h30-12h00					
12h00-12h30					
12h30-15h00			Lunch and Free Time		
15h00-18h30	Arrival & Registrations	<u>Branch Reports</u> *Walk About <u>Study Session 1:</u> Catholic Social Teachings – Fr A Egan <u>Study Session 2:</u> Catholic Understanding of Conscience – Bishop K Dowling	<u>Study Session 4:</u> Evangelisation and Culture – Fr C Ledwaba Provincial Reports	<u>Statutory Session National Reports</u> *NEC Report *Financial Report Mass	
18h30-20h00		Supper			
20h00-21h00	Icebreakers &	Prayer Session	Cell Groups		
21h00-21h30	Ground rules Expectations	Cell Group	Vigil and Confession – Fr B	Bash	

FOREWORD

The Fifteenth ACTS Annual National Conference was held at Maria Trost, Lydenburg in July 2008 with the theme "African Culture as a Gateway to Develop our Catholic Heritage".

This Report contains a record of the proceedings of the Conference and, hopefully, the information can be used for the benefit of the local Branches. The structure is based on the reports of IMCS Africa and includes the following:

- Opening Session
- Study Sessions
- Spiritual Sessions
- Statutory Session

The Study Session dealt with the spirituality of ownership and included three interesting Sessions:

- Reflection: Taking Ownership of our Situation
- Taking Ownership of our Sexuality
- Taking Ownership of Prayer as Africans.

ACTS is, at present, in the process of developing a policy around the issue of evangelisation. Hopefully, this process will assist the local Branches to reach out to the Catholic students around the country.

In conclusion, one must not forget that the social sessions and the development of many relationships are not recorded in this Report but play a vital role in developing the Movement as a family!

Ms Lebogang Masha
ACTS General Secretary

GROUND RULES

- Mutual respect for each other
- Cell phones must be off during statutory sessions and on silent during other sessions
- Punctuality
- Keep noise level down after hours
- No discrimination of any kind
- No littering
- No smoking indoors
- 100% no alcohol on site
- English as the medium of speech
- Maximum participation
- Be liberal / open minded
- Keep rooms, rest areas and surrounding areas clean
- Team work / work as a unit
- Follow procedure and schedule
- Attendance
- The need to socialise with everyone outside your university group
- Be cool and friendly

Expectations

- Networking and meeting new people / friends
- Spiritual growth
- Hygiene
- Competent leadership and leadership skills
- Cooperation
- 100% diversity
- Evangelisation
- Transformation
- Learn more about ACTS
- Good food
- Sessions to be informative
- Social freedom
- How to coordinate spiritual and cultural values
- Meet our expectations
- Have fun
- Everyone should participate
- Spiritual understanding of ACTS
- Reflect on the 15years of ACTS existence
- Methods of spreading the message of ACTS
- Lively liturgy
- Learn more about the Catholic faith and ABCD lifestyle
- A new committee

SUMMARY REPORT

DAY 1: Monday 30 June 2008

The day started with members arriving in drips and drops from various corners of the country. Registrations commenced on time as stipulated on the conference programme. The ACTS National President introduced all members of the NEC present; this was followed by introductions of individuals, then delegates came up with expectations and ground rules.

Day 2: Tuesday 1 July 2008

The day started with a march in Lydenburg's CBD en route to the Lydenburg Cathedral where the opening Mass was celebrated with Bishop Khumalo of the Witbank Diocese. The Mass was enlightening and inspirational and in a way gave an idea of how the week and the conference would turn out to be. A warm welcoming note from the ACTS National President, Mr Sello Matsena, who then introduced to us the ACTS National Chaplain, Fr M Hagan, who also gave a welcoming address, preceded the Mass. A representative from IMCS, Botswana conveyed a short message of greetings and an apology on behalf of those who could not make it to the conference. Branch reports were conducted and the different branches and provinces interacted in the form of walk about stalls, followed by a presentation on the Catholic teachings by Father Anthony Egan, and Bishop Kevin Dowling. A prayer session was held in the evening where everyone shared their experiences and we all joined in prayer for one another, and ended the day with the cell groups meetings.

Day 3: Wednesday 2 July 2008

The day started with Morning Prayer, followed by the study session of Evangelisation and Testimonies from the students in different groups, who then shared their views and solutions. Some of the issues that were touched on were racism and xenophobia. Then followed a lecture on evangelisation and culture presented by Father Ledwaba, which raised lots of questions and sparked a lot of emotional, robust debate. After this lecture, the various representatives from the respective provinces delivered provincial reports.

Day 4: Thursday 3 July 2008

Morning Prayer began the day, after which we set out on an exposure visit to the Sabie waterfalls and the various tourist attraction sites of Mpumalanga, surrounded by hills and pine plantations. The sight-seeing lasted the whole day and the students were taking endless pictures of the serene and tranquil surroundings, some were lucky enough to get themselves some memorabilia of handmade mini drums. The day's programme culminated with the NEC Report together with the audited financial report, which was delivered by Mr T Leuta. To wrap things up a bash was thrown for the students.

Day 5: Friday 4 July 2008

The day began with a Morning Prayer that was followed by breakfast. After this a presentation was made by FHI Family Health Planning delivered by Mrs Sonia Pilusa, a former chairperson of UWC ACTS Branch. In this presentation

aspects of ABc intervention campaign, Ways of Abstinence and being faithful were thoroughly discussed. This was a very enlightening presentation as the students asked a lot of questions pertaining to the campaign and what was expected from them regarding lifestyle changes. Following the presentation the dissolution of the then current NEC was made to pave the way for the election to take place and the new NEC to be elected. The election procedures were explained by Fr Michael Hagan and the election programme articulated. The elections took place thereafter and, as usual, there were plenty of emotions and robust arguments pertaining to the candidates nominated. Over all the elections were conducted in a fair, transparent and democratic manner and the new NEC was elected. Following the elections an Induction Mass was held.

Day 6: Saturday 5 July 2008

The last day of the conference has always been marked by sadness and emotion as it parts people who have bonded and shared their thoughts and views for a week. Despite the element of sadness that was written all over delegates' faces, the spirit of unity and brotherhood/sisterhood prevailed as members departed to their respective homes and/or campuses. Another end to a great week in the ACTS' calendar.

OPENING SESSION

- **March through the City of Lydenburg**
- **Opening Mass with Bishop Paul Khumalo**
- **Greeting from the delegates of Botswana**
- **ACTS National President's Welcome**
- **Chaplain's Address**

STUDY SESSION
“CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS AND EVANGELISATION”

- **Session 1: “CONSCIENCE”**

- **Session 2: “”**

- **Session 3: “”**

CONSCIENCE

By: Bishop Kevin Dowling CSSR

Introduction

Can contraception ever be lawful?

Should celibacy be withdrawn as a rule of the Church, and priests who want to, be allowed to marry?

Should lesbians/homosexuals have the same rights as anyone else?

Should Catholics who are divorced and have remarried be allowed to receive the Eucharist?

Is it morally right or wrong to use condoms to prevent infection with HIV/AIDS?

Just think through those questions, and then buzz and share with each other on three questions: What do you think the official Church teaches on these matters? What is your answer to those questions? Do all Catholics have the same opinion on these questions – and why?

Perhaps here we face the issue: Should all Catholics simply obey without question the teaching of the Church, i.e. official pronouncements from Rome or from the bishops, or is there space for legitimate difference of opinion on certain matters; and if so, on what matters can Catholics hold differing opinions? And if everyone can simply follow their own opinion on any issue where does this leave the unity of the Church as a faith community?

We are primarily concerned here with issues of morality and official Church teaching, not with questions of faith. When we hear that expression “the teaching of the Church” this refers basically to what the Church teaches concerning faith and morals. But there is an important distinction here between the issues of faith which are essential to being a Catholic and then questions of morality and the internal order or way of life of the Church, or its pastoral policies or positions concerning what is good or not for society, and so on. So, there are the central or core teachings of our faith, e.g. that God exists, the divine and human nature of Jesus, that he was both God and human, the Resurrection, the Trinity and so forth. If we do not believe these central core teachings of faith, then basically it means we are opting out of being a Catholic, we no longer belong to this particular faith community.

But the Church also has a huge range of other teachings, policies and statements, e.g. on matters of morality like birth control, sex outside marriage, abortion, euthanasia, etc. The Church also has a magnificent set of values and principles enshrined in what is called Catholic Social Teaching, e.g. the common good, solidarity, the primacy of the poor (option for the poor), the integrity of creation. The Church also has many teachings and has issued many statements on the issue of poverty and the rich-poor divide, capitalism, trade unions, refugees, war, peace, economic justice, and so on. Then there are the internal policies and matters regulating the internal life of the Church, e.g. that only men can be ordained priests, and the recent new translations of the liturgical texts. In addition, there were all sorts of practical rules which were practiced at certain times, and no longer exist, e.g. not eating meat on Fridays, fasting for the whole night before receiving Communion, women needing to wear a hat or a veil when they came into a church, and so on.

Now, must we all follow these teachings in the same way that we follow teachings on core matters of our faith? I am sure you have met or heard of Catholics who would say “yes, whatever Rome or the bishops say, we must obey”! One can understand this to a certain extent. It gives a sense of security to some people when everything is black or white, and there is no grey area where one has to think and reflect carefully and try to make up one’s mind about what is the best or right thing to do. That is the attraction of fundamentalist groupings in both the Christian or any other faith tradition – clearly defined rules about what one must think, about what one must do or not do, with no place for doubt or difference of opinion.

Here we must recognize with gratitude and appreciation that the Church has a long history and has developed over the centuries a rich resource of knowledge and wisdom, spiritual guidance and principles and values which can really help us on our pilgrimage and journey through life. Much of Church teaching can give us inspiration and insights into how to analyse and respond to the crucial issues affecting the world and its people, e.g. the rich resource of Catholic Social Teaching concerning issues of social and environmental justice. The Church has also incorporated the insights and findings of scientific research into its understanding of the world and human and societal behaviour.

But the Church has both a divine and human element in it. The Spirit lives in the Church community, and in us, but we are also subject to our human prejudices, failings, and sinfulness; there will be both the positive and negative in the Church community and all its members. And so the Church and Church leadership are capable of making errors of judgement, even serious mistakes, and the history of the Church is full of these – and we should not be surprised or shocked at all about this. For example, several centuries ago the Church approved of the torture of heretics, something unthinkable today when the Church will fully participate in events surrounding the United Nations Day against torture on 26 June (as I did a few times in Bulawayo Cathedral together with torture victims from Zimbabwe). Perhaps one of the most famous examples of the mistakes of the official Church was the condemnation by the Church of Galileo’s discovery in the 17th century that the earth moves round the sun. Much later the Church changed its stance, but it was only in 1993 that the Pope officially recognised Galileo’s innocence. So, the Church can develop its knowledge on a whole variety of issues over time, and many times it may have to change its position accordingly. The problem is that the official Church usually takes a long time before it will change its position.

This simply underlines the fact that what is not essential teaching, what is non-basic teaching in the Church is not unchangeable; it is not for ever, and the Church will hopefully continue to learn from its mistakes and maintain a humble, searching attitude in what is becoming an increasingly complex world where issues are very difficult to deal with constructively in order to achieve the best possible result.

But what about morality, issues concerning our moral behaviour, e.g. sexual behaviour? Is Church teaching on issues of morality binding on us, does it call for simple unquestioning obedience? On the one hand we must recognize that just because the Church has made mistakes on certain issues in the past, this does not necessarily mean that we are justified in disagreeing with or

dissenting from anything in the present Church teaching on morality. On the other hand, we have to examine whether present Church teaching on different issues is truly unchangeable or absolute, or if it will require our obedience. And it is here that the matter of conscience comes in.

Conscience

The teaching and tradition of the Church concerning conscience is clear; it is the *formation* of one's conscience and *how to act in accordance with one's conscience* that provides the challenge. In recent years, however, there has not been much focus on the issue of conscience in the Church.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church one reads: "Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions....especially in religious matters..." (paragraph 1782).

Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Freedom was also quite clear in its statement that no person can "be forced to act in a manner contrary to one's conscience. Nor...is one to be restrained from acting in accordance with conscience, especially in matters religious" (#3).

We have a fuller explanation in Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: "Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in the depths..... Man's dignity, therefore, requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint." (Gaudium et Spes, #16 and #17).

What is evident here is that our conscience is *autonomous*. But that is not the end of the matter. If we are facing some moral problem, and we simply decide to do what we *feel* inclined to do, that would not be a decision of conscience or a decision we have conscientiously made. Our conscience needs to be informed, we need to reflect and decide on a course of action after we have informed ourselves about the matter and examined carefully the options or alternative responses we have on the basis of the values by which we live, or want to live. We cannot, therefore, just do what we feel like doing and think that we are acting in accordance with our conscience.

Informing Ourselves

To inform ourselves properly about the moral issue we are facing does not mean, of course, that we have to go in search of all the available documents and relevant information or knowledge on the subject. Yes we can read up material and it is good to do so. We can also approach someone in a pastoral context or someone who is knowledgeable, e.g. our chaplain or a priest/religious or lay leader one knows and trusts, a counsellor, an ethics professor, and chat through the issue. The role of the chaplain or confidant is not simply to give you the official line, but to share with you in a reflective way the different aspects of the question, even to challenge your assumptions, helping you to recognise the alternatives and to reflect on the values which you want to express in the decision you will make, or the way you may be ignoring important values which can affect you and others.

We often face many moral dilemmas in our life where we are not sure what is the right or best thing to do in the circumstances we face. For example, our responsibility towards the community in which we live, our personal relationships with others, our ideas about sexuality and sexual relationships, justice issues, honesty in a work situation, and so on. What we will decide to do, or the solution we will seek, should always be based on the objective of what is the good and life-giving thing to do, according to Jesus' fundamental call: "You must love your neighbour as yourself".

Another problem is that morality and moral decisions have often been viewed or limited to single or separate individual acts, e.g. an act of stealing, or a deliberate lie, or a sexual act. Morality also has to do with longer term attitudes and ways of thinking, e.g. an attitude of thinking less of particular groups or individuals; prejudices against them or even contempt for them; our habits; the way we might continually neglect to do the right and good thing in our homes, families or communities; the damage we can cause to the environment by littering, and so forth. Morality, therefore, also has to do with our basic overall approach to people, life, the community, the environment and so on. Is our basic overall approach in life something life-giving for ourselves, for others, for the community, for the environment? That is the question.

What I am suggesting here is that we as people should be thinking – I stress – thinking seriously about our life, thinking seriously about our faith and values and the implications these have for our moral behaviour in all aspects of daily living. We should be people who can really act out of a conscious and free choice "moved and drawn from within", following our formed and informed conscience, and not merely responding, reacting or acting from blind impulse, or because of pressure from others especially our peer group, or just following what everyone seems to be doing.

Part of forming an informed conscience means that we listen to the moral guidance given by the Church as part of the process of making a moral decision. But if we come to a decision which seems to differ from the official guidance on a moral matter, e.g. contraception, does this imply disloyalty to the Church? (Buzz about that for a minute or two).

An Example of a Moral Issue: Sero-Discordant Couples

In 2001, the Bishops of Southern Africa issued a pastoral statement called 'A Message of Hope' dealing with HIV/AIDS. Part of this focussed on the situation of a married couple where one partner has become HIV positive, and the statement dealt with this as follows: "There are couples where one of the partners is living with HIV/AIDS. In these cases there is a real danger that the healthy partner may contract this killer disease. The Church accepts that everyone has the right to defend one's life against mortal danger. This would include using the appropriate means and course of action.

Similarly, where one spouse is infected with HIV/AIDS they must listen to their consciences. They are the only ones who can choose the appropriate means in order to defend themselves against the infection. Decisions of such an intimate nature should be made by both husband and wife as equal and loving partners." What do you think about this? (Buzz and comments).

The issue, therefore, of discordant couples – or indeed of two people contemplating marriage where one is HIV+ - needs to be examined in the light of a moral and ethical understanding of the issue, and in terms of a theology which is “done” in the current context of HIV. One partner has become HIV+. There are several consequences which must be thought through, e.g. the children and the need for both, or at least one parent, to live and care for the family.

Another consequence is the relationship between the husband and wife and its meaning for the stability of the marriage and promoting an environment conducive to a sound upbringing of the children. Within this reality, the permissibility or advisability of continuing a sexual relationship – and the consequences.

We, therefore, need to adopt a *holistic* approach. Because of the serious consequences due to one partner becoming discordant, what approach, or theological approach, can or should be taken?

Firstly, counselling concerning the provision of accurate information and the awareness of the consequences of a sexual act between discordant couples – and the options they have. If the couple decide that it is very important to have and continue a sexual relationship as part of their ongoing love relationship and as means of sustaining their marriage, can they be counselled about the use of a condom as a means of protection so that they can be enabled to work towards the goals they have discerned – and take the risk that it might not be 100% effective?

The approach, therefore, would seem to indicate encouraging decision-making on the basis of an *informed conscience*, and Church leaders and pastors accompanying couples in this situation have a vital role in providing that caring, respectful atmosphere in which the couple can look at the issue honestly and with trust in each other on the basis of clear and accurate information.

Forming a Good Conscience

Our goal, therefore – to form a good conscience so that we can exercise responsible autonomy in the search for truth. So, in making moral decisions in our life it is important that we don't just decide and act. We need to search for the truth in life. In this quest or search there are two texts which can guide us from Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Freedom:

“This Vatican Synod urges....those (who are) educating others....to form persons....who will come to decisions on their own judgement and in the light of truth, govern their activities with a sense of responsibility and strive after what is true and right, willing always to join with others in co-operative effort.....(#8)”

“Truth is to be sought after in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication and dialogue. In the course of these, people explain to one another the truth they have discovered, or think they

have discovered. Moreover, as the truth is discovered, it is by personal assent that people are to adhere to it.” (#3). So, we need to exercise responsible autonomy in the decisions we make, and not just follow what is told to us, or the opinion of the majority, in slavish obedience.

As those texts from the Vatican Council suggest, it is important that we learn about moral principles which should guide our decision-making, that we make ourselves aware of the Church’s stance or position on the more important moral issues of our time, and that we engage in discussion with others so that we can deepen our insights into a given issue. We need to be aware of taking the easy way out, or oversimplifying questions and issues, of the ways our own judgement can be distorted by the way we might feel about certain questions, thus leading to a lack of balance in trying to discern what is the truth.

We need to honestly admit that often we feel uncertain about what is best to do in particular circumstances. As Christians, our guiding principle is that we are called and challenged to think, reflect and use our powers of judgement so that we can direct our lives and honestly evaluate the morality of a particular action which we might be contemplating. And never to judge others. One way we can develop good consciences is through our meetings and workshops where we can pose some moral dilemmas for discussion among ourselves. This will help us to think critically about issues in life, about what is moral or ethical or not; it will help us to analyse the “why’s”, the reasons which support a particular moral position, and through listening to different opinions we can evaluate ourselves and our growth towards maturity in moral decision-making.

Wisdom

We need therefore to pray for and seek the wisdom which will assist us in making judgements about the morality of actions, policies and situations in whatever arena of life we might contemplate – personal and family life, society, politics, economics, and so on. To achieve wisdom we need to look at criteria such as fairness and prudence. The American educationist and psychologist, Robert Sternberg, explains the term wisdom in this way...it is “the successful balancing of intra-personal, inter-personal and extra-personal interests by adapting to, shaping and selecting environments, in order to achieve a common good. This common good is in turn determined through the application of values”. In making wise moral judgements we need to balance the interests of self, of others, of the institutions in the communities and society so that the common good of all can be protected and enhanced.

Conclusion

As members of ACTS we, like all Christians, have received a unique and personal call and mission which we are invited to live in real life as it really is. Our call and mission is not only to take on conscientious responsibility for ourselves, but also for all others, to take responsibility for building up and ensuring a quality of life for all especially the poorest and most vulnerable in our society, and to act in conscience to preserve life itself and the environment for future generations.

I encourage you, therefore, to be people who know how to live faith in real life, and to search for the relevant answers through developing and deepening an informed conscience concerning all the crucial issues we face in life and in the world of today.

THE ORIGINS OF MODERN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Fr Anthony Egan SJ

Catholic Social Teaching is so much part of contemporary Catholic culture that we forget that it is a relatively new phenomenon in the life of the Church. Beginning with the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII in 1891, progressing through numerous encyclicals, letters, statements of bishops' conferences and the documents of Vatican II (1962-1965), it is easy to think this 'has always been' the way the Church comments on social affairs and provides moral guidance to the faithful and people of goodwill alike.

Not so! Modern Catholic Social teaching, although drawing on the Church's moral traditions, is rooted in a series of crises in the late-nineteenth century – crises that stripped the Papacy of political power, that challenged the Church's claims to represent the poor and, even, the crisis of how Christians understood faith itself. This article will try to sketch these developments to provide a much-needed context to our reading of Catholic Social teaching by looking at the historical roots of three key perspectives.

Negotiations: Church and State

Much of Catholic Social teaching is directly or indirectly about the relationship between Church and State. It speaks eloquently about democracy, human rights, the duties and limitations of government, and of the roles that local communities must play in governance and in the promotion of the common good. How and why did this concern develop?

Historically the Church has shifted from being a marginal sect awaiting the Second Coming, through being the 'glue' that held society together, to being one politically powerless but socially influential player among many on the world stage. After the rise of the Emperor Constantine and the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, the Church had dual roles: spiritual and moral leadership as well as being a powerful political entity in its own right. Large parts of contemporary Italy were part of the Papal States; the Pope was a king in his own right, with all the rights – to tax, legislate and wage war – that the position entailed.

With the sixteenth century Reformation, the unity of Catholic Europe (often called Christendom) fragmented. This was rapidly followed by the secularisation and later democratisation of Europe. The spiritual-political social 'glue' that was the Church evaporated. The Church tried to keep some kind of spiritual authority in Catholic lands, while the Pope – increasingly embattled by the forces of Italian unification and ideas hostile to notions of 'spiritual absolute monarchy' – desperately tried, to no avail, to keep his lands. In 1870 and 1871, the Papal States fell to the forces of Italian unification and the Pope was confined to the papal apartments near St Peter's in Rome, effectively a 'prisoner in the Vatican'.

Initially the Papacy and the Church responded to the new developments as it 'had always done' from the late 1840s – with condemnation, denunciation and excommunication. Liberal democracy, republicanism, religious pluralism and the notion of a secular state was condemned as an 'error' during the long papacy of Pius IX, which spanned this period – to no avail. The new Italian

state, apart from radical secularists who pilloried the Pope in the press, largely ignored the Church.

When Leo XIII succeeded to the papal throne in 1878, he was faced with a choice: continue the hostility or seek some kind of critical rapprochement with secular society. At first he continued the confrontational policy of Pius IX: under pain of excommunication Catholics were forbidden to vote or hold office in Italy. Largely, this was either ignored by the populace or it led to the rise of radical anti-clerical politicians who made life for the Pope even more uncomfortable.

Unlike Pius IX, Leo was a diplomat and he soon started to use his considerable diplomatic skills to try to build up better relations with the new states in Europe. Hostility towards the Church eased somewhat but the Pope was concerned that the Church was losing influence at a time when liberal secularism, rationalism and, increasingly Marxism, were on the rise. A new strategy was needed to present the Catholic understanding of social life to the world: one based on reason, observation of social reality, and, above all, moral persuasion rather than the spiritual '*fiat*'.

From Primitive Communism to anti-Globalism

As soon as the expectation of the Second Coming dwindled into a memory, the primitive communism practised by the early Christians (as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles) declined. As a marginal sect in the Roman Empire, the Christian communities engaged in mutual self-help schemes and charitable works among the wider community while largely retaining the social structures (nobility, free persons, merchants, peasants, slaves) of the Empire. When the Church triumphed, social structures remained intact – despite the prophetic teachings of saints and scholars who constantly warned about the dangers of the love of riches.

Marginal Christian groups continued throughout Christendom to challenge the *status quo* but were variously suppressed or ignored or they died out with their charismatic founders. A few such movements, like the Franciscans, were 'institutionalised' by the Church, losing their radical edge in the process. Feudalism and, later, early capitalism was blessed by the Church, which encouraged people to believe that their 'station in life' was ordained by God.

The rise of modern socialism challenged this ethos on a number of levels. It challenged the assumption that social positions were divinely willed and, in the process, attacked the very notion of religion as a force that defended the socio-economic *status quo*. Religion, including Catholicism, was for them part of the forces that oppressed and marginalised. As with the State and dominant classes, the Church and religion had to be overthrown for what Marx and Engels called the 'working class' to triumph.

Christian attempts, by Catholics and Protestants, to respond positively to the rise of socialism – Christian Socialism – failed to capture the imagination of the new working-class movements. It was perhaps too little too late, and the efforts of these always fairly marginal groups could not counteract the widespread perception of official Church hostility – or simply inertia – towards trade unions and socialist political parties. BY the end of the nineteenth

century, church observers cannily noted that ‘the Church has lost the European working class’.

Profoundly conscious of this, Leo XIII’s first encyclical tried to address this problem specifically. Cautious in its tone, it tried to win back at least some of the alienated working class, with fairly limited results. Subsequent encyclicals from 1891 to the present day have tried to do the same, though they have become more overtly critical of capitalism – and in an apparently post-Marxist, post-communist world, have tried to be critical of the economic consequences of unrestrained globalised capitalism.

Speaking of God after the Fall of Christendom

With the declining political power of the medieval Church and the rise of Protestantism, the age of Christendom – the notion of a society ruled by Christianity – ended forever. With the rise of the Enlightenment, the presupposition of the truth of Christianity itself came into question. As Christian Europe colonised the world, the notion of Christian uniqueness, the idea that Christianity was the one true faith, collapsed. Evolutionary science, as interpreted by some militant rationalists, even suggested that God was a figment of the imagination. By the late-twentieth century this collapse of all great overarching ways of interpreting the world – sometimes called metanarratives – had a name: postmodernity.

Faced with what one scholar has called ‘God’s funeral’, the Church had tough choices to make. One strategy was the condemn-denounce-excommunicate model of Pius IX. As with facing up to the demise of the papal states, this would render church officials becoming ‘prisoners in their Vatican’, blocking out the outside world while impotently watching society, and many Catholics, going their own merry way – even if it was in the Church’s eyes the way of perdition. The alternative was to engage with and to dialogue with the world. Such engagement could not be done simply by repeating dogmas – or even by translating them into vernacular languages. The Church was faced with the challenge of presenting its case, whether about God or commerce or democracy in, what was effectively, secular language. It also had to understand new developments – in science, technology, economics and politics – on their own terms.

Drawing on this latter approach, Catholic Social teaching developed what is, in effect, an inductive method – starting from the facts and then reflecting theologically upon them. This was by no means a quick or easy process but, as Catholic Social Teaching developed during the twentieth century, this became common. The high point of this was perhaps the 1986 United States Catholic Bishops’ letter *Economic Justice For All*, which was developed first by intense consultation with economists, business people, unions and sociologists before the theologians even started to reflect on the moral implications of the US economy. This did not stop it from being called ‘warmed-over Marxism’ by conservative critics.

A Work in Progress

Catholic Social teaching came out of a necessity: the need for the Church to respond to a world that had changed – changed utterly. Faced with political impotence, seeming institutional irrelevance and the final collapse of a particular Christian worldview that no longer could sustain it, the Church

decided to engage with the world in worldly language while drawing on the riches of its tradition. This was a daring, courageous step, an embracing of the historical and the contingent, the changing nature of society, in order to provide Christian insight into social problems in a new mode and language. In a sense, one might say that Catholic Social teaching provided the historical precedent for the reform of the Church which moved into other sectors at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), a move that started a new way of thinking that might renew the Christian faith after the much-trumpeted 'funeral' of God.

Since it is always responding to historical events, Catholic Social teaching is a work in progress. In this it continues to echo the reminder to the whole Church that Vatican II proclaimed. We are a Church continually being reformed, an *'ecclesia semper reformanda'*.

EVANGELISATION: FAITH and CULTURE

By: Fr Michael Hagan ISch

Introduction

Over the past few years the SACBC Youth Office has been promoting and developing the Diocesan Youth Structures in Southern Africa. Not only has a particular model been developed, but also a diocesan youth spirituality. This youth spirituality is about young people discerning the signs of the times in the midst of the youth culture of the sub-continent, both within urban and rural areas; involving the youth of diverse backgrounds, realising that this process includes various racial groups with varying economic backgrounds. The process of discerning the signs of the times is primarily about *listening* to what the living God is saying to the young people of today. The challenge confronting the youth is to formulate a relevant response to the identified promptings of the Spirit.

An identified sign of the times and response

The elected Diocesan Youth Leaders over the past years, having analysed, reflected and listened to the promptings of the Spirit, have identified *evangelisation and culture* as important signs of the times within the context of the youth of Southern Africa. The challenge is now to formulate a relevant response to these issues. This response can give direction for youth ministry within Southern Africa.

Evangelisation and Culture

Bringing Christ to the youth of Southern Africa is about relating two tensions in a constructive way, namely relating *Evangelisation* and *Cultural context*.

When dealing with tensions, we are dealing with a Catholic way of thinking. A Catholic way of thinking is about holism – a holistic way of thinking. A (Cath)-holistic way of thinking is about a thinking which is bi-polar, a thinking which always includes two perspectives. This way of thinking is reflected in creation, for example in the earth itself. Such tensions can be seen between the north pole and the south pole. Other examples of tension are east/west, black/white, magnetic/non-magnetic, law/freedom and faith/life. Using our holistic mindset as Catholics, we are challenged to relate the message of Christ – faith and culture which lives in a context. One's thinking is never either/or but rather and/also.

Possibly, where we can reach agreement, is as to who Christ is. Christ is our light, our hope. Christ is our Lord and Saviour. Christ is our brother and friend. It is he who is our liberator. It would appear that the challenging issue is how we should define our cultural context. Furthermore, how do we bring Jesus Christ as the Redeemer into this new South Africa, the post-apartheid and post-colonial South Africa?

Our route to find a solution, as I see it, is to “do theology” together, the Youth Chaplains and the youth themselves. And, hopefully, out of this process, an indigenous Catholic African theology which has the capacity to relate to the Universal Church will emerge.

Possible Features of a Relevant Theology

Listening

Some of the features of this reflection will include looking at the history of Africa and the consequences of this history. Thus I would like to mention the writings of a Nigerian theologian who wrote a book called “The Listening Church”. In this book the writer states that the psyche of Africa has been affected by two events, firstly, the effects of the slave-trade and, secondly, colonialism. And he poses the question whether the HIV / AIDS pandemic will be the third. He suggests a possible solution for the Church and theology by saying that the Church needs to *listen* – listen to the people and listen to the culture of Africa! This process of listening he calls a “*Big Ears Theology*”.

I think that one of the most important features of trying to come to terms with evangelisation and culture, of young evangelisation, is about listening. Listening so that the soul of young Africans, the indigenous people of Africa, can speak and can be heard. Each youth group is primarily a faith-community and in this sense each faith community is a “holy space” where the energy, the beauty and the pain can speak and express itself.

It is what unfolds in this holy space that has to be linked to Jesus Christ. For example, a night vigil which includes incense, dance, music, water, the Word of God and so on, give the opportunity for meaningful African liturgies.

Healing

Another feature of an integrated and relevant Catholic theology in Africa for the youth is the issue of healing. The consequences of the past history of South Africa bring with it many wounds and hurts. With regard to the youth, I think from listening to the youth, the issue affecting their lives is about the lack of ownership – the lack of ownership of oneself, one’s body, one’s Church, one’s land and even one’s country. A central feature of youth evangelisation is therefore about this lack of ownership and the question of healing. Not a physical healing, but leading young people on a process, a spiritual journey, to integration, which includes the psychological, emotional and spiritual. Ultimately, it is through the encounter with Christ that this healing will take place.

In summary, youth evangelisation means bringing the two poles of faith and culture together in the context of South Africa. This challenge highlights the need for the Church to become a listening Church where healing becomes a priority.

Youth Evangelisation in the cultural context of South Africa is about LISTENING and HEALING.

AFRICANISATION OF THE CHURCH EVANGELISATION AND AFRICAN CULTURE

By Fr Thabiso Clement Ledwaba

The need is urgent but the hour is late!

South Africa is a country located in the South tip of the vast continent called Africa. As a country, South Africa shares in the rich historical legacy of the common continent. She is part of her music, her philosophy, her civilization, slave trade, colonial history and renaissance.

But it is sad to realize that after many years of Western domination, in South Africa the attainment of Freedom never inspired the Church to restore the dignity and the pride of the African Culture which was institutionally suppressed for those many years of subjugation. This is a very frustrating truth since the urgency is not felt. It takes a priest who is continuously reflective about this matter to see its cruciality. Sadly many of our priests are merely content with being good and well-behaved parish priests, uninterested in exploring new theological avenues. This is an open reality. For as long as this remains a reality the African Church will be dull and retarded, thus forever dependent. I still cannot identify, in the South African context, a radical effort that seeks to keep and encourage the theological mind theologising.

The present day African Priest has a duty to recognise and appreciate his indigenous traditional foundations of thought to see how best can he dialogue with them and come up with a theological position that could embrace both culture and the Christian message. It is unhealthy for the Christian community to worship God in a church that reminds them they are foreigners. Our rituals need not be complicated and confusing to the intelligibility of the ordinary mind. An African priest and theologian has a task to lead the child of God home. An African Priest needs to know and make sure that it becomes possible for the word - LITURGY to attain its full meaning in African soil as a true Public Worship. Up to so far it is a public worship in a sense that it is celebrated by the public but the public understanding and interpretation leaves a lot to be desired.

Ever since Inculturation became a crucial subject in the African Church the purpose has always been that of making Africans feel and be at home in the Church. But to date this objective has not been met and I am tempted to doubt the seriousness of those supposed to carry this agenda forward. I strongly wonder if they truly understand what is this agenda about. For so long as these efforts are trivialized, an African will continue to apply a superficial response to the message of the Gospel. Our committed catechists for instance, how deep is their insight as far the content of their subject is concerned? An African theologian has a task. Religion has divided people in the African family and most of these divisions cannot be explained by the rival groups themselves. The shallowness of the faith is clearly depicted in the manner in which our people flood into the Pentecostal churches mushrooming in our villages, townships and towns. In the name of salvation they insult mainline churches and traditional African practices as barbaric and satanic.

This leaves me wondering whether are we converting or diverting in our journey of conversion. When John the Baptist was calling upon the people to convert and believe the good news, he was not suggesting anything radically new. He was trying to bring the people back to the original way which biblical giants like Abraham and Moses once embarked upon. So that in my understanding, for us Africans this message should mean that we need to go back to that age that made the birth of Ubuntu philosophy possible; to that age of proverbs and wise adages, to that age when Humanity and God could dialogue in harmony. That age did exist and the nagging question still hangs on the lips of the elderly: What went wrong? Where is respect, where are the healers, where are the noble men, where is truth, where is intergrity? This is the age, in my understanding, when John the Baptist's voice struggles to scream for its restoration. The African theologian has a task, basically to draw from scripture the true meaning of life. So urgent is the need and yet so late is the hour.

**WORKSHOP - ABC MODEL
PRESENTATION OF THE HIV/AIDS PREVENTION MANUAL**

By: Family Health International Team

Introduction to the Definition and Concept of the Bridge Model

The Bridge Model is a concept stating that having information does not necessarily mean behaviour change. Group discussion about risky behaviour, especially behaviour on campus.

1. Communications Skills

How to develop and encourage good communication skills.

2. Introduction to Decision Making Skills

There are two types of decisions: one involves conscious thought and one involves a choice between at least two alternatives, where one can know or guess some of the consequences of each alternative. In making decisions, feelings should be considered (eg. fear, anger, happiness, fulfilment, etc.), also beliefs and those of the family (eg. friendship is important but honesty is more important, etc.) and the possible consequences, good and bad, of each alternative.

3. Methodologies, Facilitation

4. Key Messages

Good negotiation skills facilitate good communication.

5. Managing Emotions

“When We Suppress the Inner Angel He Turns into a Devil” – Victor Frankly.

6. Responding to Persuasion

Standing up above the common sex pressure lines.

SPIRITUAL SESSIONS

During the course of the Fourteenth ACTS National Conference the following Spiritual Sessions were included:

- Daily Morning Prayer (conducted by the students)
- Daily Mass:
 - Tuesday - Opening Mass celebrated by Bishop Khumalo
 - Wednesday – Mass celebrated by Fr L Khumalo
 - Thursday – Mass celebrated by Fr B Mhlongo
 - Friday – Closing Mass celebrated by Fr D Sehlabaka
- Prayer Service (conducted by the students)
- Night Vigil with individual confessions (The Night Vigil with confession was a new feature of this Conference and is a replacement of the morning Retreat)

STATUTARY SESSION

- **ACTS NEC Report 2007 / 2008**
- **ACTS National Financial Report 31 May 2008**
- **Provincial Reports**
- **Minutes of the Election**

**STATUTARY SESSION
ACTS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE JULY 2008
MARIA TROST: LYDENBURG**

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1. STATE OF THE ORGANISATION

I ACTS National Executive Committee

ACTS National Patron	Bishop ZP Mvemve
ACTS National Chaplain	Fr Michael Hagan
ACTS National President	Mr Sello Matsena
ACTS National General Secretary	Ms Lebogang Masha
ACTS National Treasurer	Mr Toka Leuta
ACTS National Media and Publicity Officer	Mr Sifiso Mathebula
ACTS Western Cape NEC Member	Mr Kgopotso Lekhelebana
ACTS KZN NEC Member	Ms Marcia Dlamini
ACTS Free State NEC Member	Ms Beata Campbell
ACTS Gauteng NEC Member	Mr Mohapi Phosholi
ACTS Eastern Cape NEC Member	Mr Nduduzo Jali

II ACTS National Chaplaincy

Bravo to our ACTS National Chaplain, Fr Michael Hagan, who is based in Cape Town and currently holding this position. His work is evident to all. The process of appointing a new National Chaplain is an on-going process; names will be submitted to the Bishops and the appointed person will resume duties next year in May 2009.

III ACTS National Presidency

The National President, Mr Sello Matsena, brought a lot of experience from the previous NEC. ACTS continued to be efficient with regular communication amongst NEC Members, always sparking debates around issues that needed immediate attention. A number of meetings had been convened in consultation with the Secretariat, which all NEC members attended. It was all work, as it was before, throughout his term of office. Through his portfolio as ACTS National President, he has put a lot of effort into the ongoing procedures of importance from his previous portfolio as ACTS General Secretary, being the 'Engine' of the Association, and he therefore contributed a great deal to Ms Lebogang Masha with her portfolio duties.

IV The Secretariat

The portfolio is regarded as the 'core' of the Association. It was through this that communication was made possible, with most of our Branches receiving information from the ACTS National Office about significant and informative matters. This was to ensure the proper functioning of the organisation without any obstacles. The accountability lay in the hands of Ms Lebogang Masha with the assistance of the ACTS Administrator, Mr Fezi Matanganyi who is now succeeded by Mr Caritas Maselesele. Although some problems were experienced by some of the Branches as regards to receipt of faxes, most of the Branches received correspondence without technical hindrances. The fact that both this NEC Report and the Financial Statements have been made

available at the start of the Conference is a new achievement for the ACTS National Office, and hopefully this is appreciated. We therefore urge all Branches who have not been able to receive faxes to inform the incoming NEC of the way in which they can be reached.

V Financial

Dealing with public resources is never easy and is always a challenge. The detailed, audited ACTS Financial Statements for the year ending 31 May, 2008 will be presented after this Report.

VI Media and publicity

The ACTS Media and Publicity Portfolio has the responsibility to ensure that all events of ACTS are publicised to the members and further afield, with publications such as ACTS INFO, ACTION S ACTS stickers and ACTS publications of the Conferences. Added to this, articles about ACTS have been published in various newspapers such as, The Southern Cross, Sunday Sun, Ilanga and UmAfrika – which mostly deal with Catholic issues; for instance, the launch of ACTS DUT (Durban).

The Media and Publicity Officer has also been working on the ACTS Website which should be in a short while linked with the SACBC Website and, hopefully, this will be working within the coming month. This has been one of the mandates from the 2007 ACTS National Conference, and we can say it has not been easy. We hope that the incoming NEC will ensure that the matter will be laid to rest and ACTS members nationwide can access and communicate with each other over the website

During the course of the year the following were published:

- 2 copies of ACTS INFO
- 1 edition of ACTION S
- Updated ACTS stickers
- Reports of both the Leadership and Training Conference 2007, and the ACTS National Conference 2007
- Updated publications of the National Documents:
 - Book One: Constitutions
 - Book Two: Leadership Training

VII Spiritual and Liturgy

A number of spiritually fulfilling events were witnessed during our National events. The ACTS National Spiritual and Liturgy Officer, Ms Marcia Dlamini, urges delegates present here today to forward articles to her Office during this Conference in order for her to complete the edition of ACTSpiritual which should be available at the end of the gathering. To mention some of the achievements the following should be acknowledged:

- 1 ACTSpiritual

As in the case of last year, Fr Victor Phalana and Fr Thabiso Ledwaba have been invited to attend this year's ACTS National Conference to hold a Night Vigil during which they will conduct a healing service with confessions. The theme of this year's Conference highlighting culture and evangelisation challenges all of us to evangelise especially the Catholic students at our campuses.

VIII Gender and Human Rights

ACTS National Documents state clearly that ACTS is non-sexist. Gender, ethnicity, nationality and language do not matter when you are a member of this community of friends. The ACTS Office of Gender and Human Rights is under the care of Mr Mohapi Phosholi. The scenes of hatred, which we have just witnessed recently in our country towards other human beings who are created in the image of God, is labelled as "xenophobia". This is straying from the real source of the matter, which is now being socially accepted by society as a psychological, mental state. If there are wrongs, which are perceived as being done by our brothers and sisters from elsewhere in the continent in this equation of the matter, we must be concerned, but two wrongs will never make a right and that is the bottom line, which cannot be disputed. We hope that at the end of this Conference we who are gathered here this week can come up with a tentative resolution or statement regarding the recent xenophobic and racism volcano that has just erupted amongst the young people of our beloved continent.

IX Alumni

The developments with regard to this portfolio have been slow but promising. Some Branches have not established this portfolio as resolved at the 2005/2006 ACTS National Conference. Certain Provinces have once again gone an extra mile by inviting Alumni to most of their functions and meetings. These Alumni showed much interest in being regarded as resources for the Association, rather than being considered as mainly financial resources. Branches where nothing has been done are therefore encouraged to establish a database of Alumni at Branch level and so, eventually, a National Database.

2 MANDATES FROM THE EARLIER NATIONAL CONFERENCE

As outlined in the 2007 NEC Report, the incoming NEC was assigned with the following:

- **ACTS attending the World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia**

With regard to this issue we hope that we will be able to send someone to the World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney Australia.

- **ACTS being part of the developing Diocesan Youth Structures**

ACTS members have been involved immensely with the establishment of and assistance to the Diocesan Youth Councils. We are finalising a Leadership Manual for the Diocesan Youth Councils in partnership with Siyabhabha Trust, and we hope that the incoming NEC will take this matter forward and continue a lasting relationship with the Youth in Dioceses, further we urge all ACTS

members during their holiday to take the initiative of assisting where possible in their respective Dioceses.

In this regard it is of significance that the ACTS National President, Mr Sello Matsena, and the ACTS General Secretary, Ms Lebogang Masha, attended the SACBC Interdiocesan Youth Leaders' Gathering in December 2007.

- **Evangelisation of Catholic Students on Campus**

The fact that the theme of this year's Conference highlights Culture and Evangelisation is a clear indication that this recommendation has been taken up very seriously by the current NEC. As indicated under the spiritual portfolio, we have once again invited Fr Thabiso Ledwaba to continue from where he left off in the December Gathering.

- **Website launch**

As mentioned above, the challenge of the website ACTS org.za will hopefully be resolved in the coming month.

- **Launch of UNIVEN to establish ACTS Limpopo Province**

Through the Grace of God, this Branch was launched and, at the same time ACTS Limpopo has been established. Due to exclusion policies, the NEC member Mr Donald Nkgadima who attended the ACTS Leadership and Training Conference in December 2007 at Koinonia was not able to return to the Institution this year. However, ACTS Limpopo Province is still running. The incoming NEC should look into the Launch of the following branches:

- Fort Hare
- DUT PMB
- Walter Sisulu (Butterworth)
- North West Vaal
- North West Potchefstroom
- CPUT Cape Town

- **Branches / Provinces adopting vigils and retreats**

Most Branches have taken up this recommendation, which we hope will be reflected in the Provincial Reports. This means that vigils and retreats are taking place amongst the ACTS branch members. Where this is not taking place, once again the present NEC would like to re-emphasise this valuable recommendation.

3 PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

I Mission and Vision Statement

The Mission and Vision Statement formulated at the primary NEC assembly read thus:

“Having discerned the signs of the times within the context of the current South African youth environment, ACTS sees the way forward as:

- *Building communities rooted in Christ through developing dynamic visionary leaders who are aware of the issues within society.*
- *Developing a Catholic heritage of Africa through prayer in order to experience God by understanding our identity and taking ownership of ACTS.*
- *Facilitating an environment that is conducive to integrate faith and student life.”*

This Mission and Vision Statement was developed in response to the current situation in our various universities whereby many Catholic students seem not to be spiritually fulfilled or developed. There is also a challenge for students to take ownership of ACTS to develop dynamic visionary leaders who are aware of the issues within society and within our universities.

It must be stated that, to some extent, ACTS has possibly influenced the SACBC AIDS Office through the issue of conscience being seen as a sign of the times regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, which is raised at most of our gatherings. The SACBC AIDS Office has taken it a step further and conducted workshops and seminars around this concept of “Conscience”.

II ACTS National Leadership and Training Conference 2007

The 2007 ACTS Leadership and Training Conference was held at Johannesburg Koinonia Conference Centre during 3 - 7 December, 2007 with the theme “Developing visionary leaders through prayer in order to experience God”. Although not every Branch managed to be present at this Conference, the objectives were attained through the NEC members presenting modules on leadership and the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign. Once again the delegates visited the Mother Teresa Hospice and were confronted with the reality of the HIV / AIDS pandemic. Two highlights of the Conference were the inputs on culture made by Fr Clement Lebwaba and the Night Vigil which was conducted by the students themselves.

III Tinned Food and Clothes Collection

This year was no different to other years as most of our Branches were engaged in the programme by collecting items to help those who are not as privileged as we are. The ACTS Projects Officer earlier sent out a communiqué to remind our Branches to go beyond expectation by ensuring that all Branches take up this project seriously. In some provinces this project is inactive while other provinces are active though not yet as effective as we would like them to be. It was further recommended at the Third NEC Meeting that Branches should not wait for the month of May letter to commence with the project but keep it ongoing.

Other Projects that will need to be implemented are the visitation of schools which will be significant in ensuring growth in the number of ACTS first year’s members. The NEC would also like to encourage each Branch to develop an Outreach Programme, for example, visiting the sick in the hospitals possibly

before Easter so that we can donate Easter Eggs to the patients. Another possibility could be the adoption of Homes.

IV ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rallies

The month of May is set aside for the Annual Youth Rallies which are held around the country with the aim of promoting the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign. This year ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rallies were conducted in Polokwane, Tshwane, Durban, Bloemfontein and Mthatha. Within the coming months Rallies will also be held in Cape Town and Sibasa (Limpopo). At such platforms the ACTS communities are able to interact with the diocesan youth and are able to share vital information about the Association.

V National Visits

This exercise serves as an opportunity to interact with ACTS members at grass-roots level. This year was not different as most of our NEC members undertook journeys to various corners of the country to visit Branches. All Provinces were visited but, due to lack of time, some Branches could not be visited individually. The NEC would like to thank all the Branches for their hospitality, patience and generosity.

4 RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

I Within the Church

Our ACTS National Chaplain has been our main link with the SACBC and as an outcome our relations with them continue to be strong. A number of Branches are enthusiastically involved with the Diocesan Youth Structures where they offer their skills and expertise, supplementarily contributing towards youth development.

The NEC has continued to maintain good relationships with our existing partners namely: Missio, SACBC Aids Office, Siyabhabha Trust and the SACBC Youth Office. It is hoped that a new partnership will be developed in the coming year with the SACBC Peace and Justice Commission.

II IMCS Africa

Once again relations with our Regional counterparts have improved enormously. Our Secretary General, Ms Lebogang Masha, attended the IMCS Zambia weeklong conference held at the University of Zambia during the month of October 2007.

We are expecting delegates from Botswana, and Zimbabwe to attend this Conference, Zambia could not be with us due to the fact that they will be preparing their journey to Sydney for the World Youth Day. However there has not been communication on the part of the Pan African council to IMCS South Africa, although South Africa is a member of the Pan African Council. Our ABCD Lifestyle Campaign has been chosen as part of the orientation

programme for Africa. Hence our ABCD lifestyle officer, Mr Lekhelebana, managed to compile and submit a report to the Pan African Council.

5 REPRESENTATIONS

Throughout our term of office the NEC represented ACTS at the following:

5.1 IMCS Zambia Conference

The above gathering took place in Zambia from October 21 - 27 2007, where the ACTS National Secretary General, Ms Lebogang Masha, represented IMCS SA (ACTS). The theme of this Assembly was "Catholic Students' Way of Living". We thank IMCS Zambia for considering us during their national events.

5.2 SACBC Pastoral Forum

The ACTS National President attended the Pastoral Forum held at Koinonia Durban during the month of September 2007, the main focus of this was evangelisation.

6 PARTNERSHIPS

The NEC is also looking into developing a new partnership with Family Health International around the issues of HIV / AIDS prevention and student leadership. This possibility arises from the support of a previous ACTS National President, Mrs Sonja Martin Pilusa.

7 REFLECTIONS

The year 2007/08 has been a term filled with work. As you all know, it is never easy to serve the public, but with the help of God the 2007/2008 NEC worked determinedly to guarantee that you, our loyal members, were kept abreast with the activities of ACTS nationwide. We would like to wish ACTS an incredible future.

- Taking into cognisance the current issues affecting the Southern African region. Particularly the issue of Zimbabwe whereby human rights are violated and the economic status of the country have totally collapsed.
- Within our country currently the leadership (power) struggles affecting the country whereby leaders are verbally and physically attacking each other in public, and uttering statements that create fear for the democracy we fought for.
- The unruly behaviour by young people particularly at the recent conference held at Mangaung, which raises the question of the capacity of youth leadership. This raises a challenge for ACTS to continuously develop the capacity of our members to become responsible and vigilant leaders.
- Racism events that unfolded in The Free State Province at the University of the Free State rejecting integration in the residences.
- Taking into action the issues raised regarding evangelisation and the integration of culture into religion.

The challenge is left for the incoming NEC to strive to fulfil the set objectives from this current Conference.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- ACTS being part of developing Diocesan Youth Structures.
- Evangelisation of Catholic Students on campus
- Encouraging active usage of the website
- Encouraging local Branches to develop partnerships with Siyabhabha Trust, SACBC AIDS Office, to fund your initiatives.
- Branches/Provinces adopting vigils and retreats
- Community service should be encouraged, such as adopting a home.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2007/2008 NEC would like to thank all of our Branches and Provinces for conceding us an opportunity to serve you, it has never been easy but with the help of God all things became possible. To our National Chaplain, Fr Michael Hagan we thank you for all the hard work and dedication you gave towards building and developing the Association.

Thank you

Compiled on behalf of the NEC by:

Lebogang Manale Masha
ACTS National Secretary General

STATUTORY SESSION

METHODS TO BE USED FOR THE REFLECTION OF REPORTS

EVALUATION / ASSESMENT / REFLECTION OF REPORTS

1. What are the strengths?

2. What are the weakness-growth areas?

3. Recommendations?

4. What is the Living God saying to ACTS in the light of these reports?
(Discerning what the Holy Spirit is saying to ACTS and the Catholic Students
of South Africa)

**STATUTARY SESSION
MINUTES OF THE ELECTION**

**15th ACTS NATIONAL CONFERENCE
MARIA TROST
LYDENBURG**

ELECTIONS 2008

ACTS NATIONAL PRESIDENT
ACTS NATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL
ACTS NATIONAL TREASURER
ACTS NATIONAL MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

Requires 50% + 1

INSTITUTIONS

- 1. WITS _____
- 2. UJ _____
- 3. CPUT (BELLVILLE) _____
- 4. UWC _____
- 5. UOFS _____
- 6. CUT _____
- 7. UCT _____
- 8. UNIZULU _____
- 9. DUT _____
- 10. UKZN (EDGEWOOD) _____
- 11. NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY _____
- 12. UKZN (HOWARD COLLEGE) _____
- 13. UNI QWA _____
- 14. UKZN (PMB) _____
- 15. RHODES _____
- 16. UNIVEN _____
- 17. UL (TURFLOOP) _____

CHAPLAIN

NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

**STATUARY SESSION
PROVINCIAL REPORTS**

- **Limpopo and North West**
- **Western Province**
- **Gauteng Province**
- **Kwa-Zulu Natal Province**
- **Free State Province**

ACTS LIMPOPO

Last year during the Second Semester, Acts University of Venda was launched, this served as a right to earn it's recognition by the National Catholic Students Community. Acts University of Limpopo and NEC made it possible for the launch. After the launch, ACTS Limpopo Province embracing ACTS UL and ACTS UNIVEN emerged, receiving National recognition.

The launch was blessed with the presence of the Rev Bishop Hugh Slattery of Tzaneen Diocese, Fr Stephan, Parish Priest of Thohoyandou, Fr Andrew, Chaplain of the Tzaneen Young Adult Movement and ACTS UL Members.

This led to the Constitution of the PEC, the Executive Committee of the Province:

- Provincial Coordinator : Ngadima Donald Mafete
- General Secretary : Mike
- And four (4) additional members, two (2) from each Branch respectively.

During the 15th ACTS Leadership Conference, ACTS Limpopo was represented by Donald Mafete accompanied by the Chairperson of ACTS UL. UNIVEN was unfortunately unable to attend due to financial issues.

During the commencing of the 2008 Academic year, we were unhappy to receive a letter of resignation letter from the then Provincial Coordinator. The NEC then appointed Majozi from UL Branch to serve as Provincial Coordinator.

The second Provincial meeting was held from 15 -16 March at Univen Campus. In this meeting issues such as the allocation of Portfolios and the Year Plan were addressed.

Looking at the activities from both Branches, we could not implement some of the ACTS Province activities and this led to the postponing of some activities to the second Semester. The following are the Members that were elected during the Meeting:

- ABCD Lifestyle Officer Mashabela Kabelo (UL)
- PRO Mkhabela Moses(Univen)
- Treasurer Mpyatona Tshana Portia(UL)
- Additional Member Masoga Kgadi(Univen)

Furthermore, ACTS Provincially was represented during the Young Adult Launch at Tzaneen Diocese outside Makhado Parish on 1 May 2008 whereby Grade 12 Catholic learners were addressed by Majozi on the Identity of ACTS and the existence of ACTS within the higher Learning Institutions around the Country.

Compiled on Behalf of the Province
Gen Secretary

ACTS WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

It has been a great year thus far. Western Province managed to have a program that suits every branch, despite the different timetables that we have. This resulted in most of the events not been done as planned and on time.

However, we had a few meetings discussing and planning the provincial program and the ABCD rally. Moreover, PEC had a day, which took place on the 19 April whereby they were discussing national policies. The ABCD Rally was supposed to take place on 1 May but was postponed because of Ascension Thursday, currently it is planned to take place on 6 September.

The Tinned Food Collection Mass was a success and was celebrated on the 4 May; we also received support from the Methodist Society and the South African Student Congress (Tisha-Vanga Branch), this event was hosted by the University of the Western Cape. CPUT Bellville Campus has built a strong relationship with the Cape Town Campus and the Mother Teresa Home, which is one of the Orphanage homes in Western Province, while UWC help out at St Joseph's Home, Montana and UCT spend their time with St Michaels. There is great communication as well as relationship between the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and the University of Cape Town (UCT). CPUT and UWC managed to send five delegates.

All branches had O-Week stands and marketed ACTS successfully, well done to UWC after two years of struggling with the O-Week stands. Currently UCT has the largest group attending Mass as compared with other branches in the province.

Upcoming provincial events:

Provincial Mass, celebrating the Archbishop's birthday, which will be celebrated at Stellenbosch University and UWC on Sunday 27 July.

ABCD Rally

Cultural Day and Sports Day hosted by UCT in September.

October we will be celebrating Fr Mike's Birthday Bash with ACTS Alumni's.

We failed to build a relationship with Stellenbosch University, since they resist attending any events taking place around Western Province and send no apologies, we hope something good will happen between all branches after celebrating the Archbishop's birthday together.

We hope to launch Cape Peninsula University of Technology Cape Town Campus.

Thanks to all delegates present from the province and most thanks to CPUT Bellville Campus for helping CPUT Cape Town Campus.

ACTS GAUTENG PROVINCE

Compiled by Mohapi Poshol

Now is the precise time for the province to reflect upon the distance it has walked so far since the year end is not too far.

Composition of the PEC

The PEC consists of seven branches mainly being; TUT (Rand campus), TUT (Kgarankuwa), University of Limpopo (Mendunsa Campus), Tuks, UJ, VUT and Wits.

As far as TUT (Soshanguve) was concerned they had not taken any part in our PEC meetings because back then we had no way of reaching out to them.

Provincial Executive Committee Members:

NAME	BRANCH	PORTFOLIO	E-MAIL ADDRESS	Cell Number
Fr Russel	Gauteng	Provincial Chaplain	_____	0114033769
Mohapi	VUT	Chairperson	mposholi@yahoo.com	0795733888
Mathabo	UP (Tuks)	Vice-Chairperson	autamathabo@yahoo.com	0765391857
Lerato	Medunsa	Liturgy officer	_____	0736201174
Ebetsamang	TUT Rand campus	Secretary General	bigdondo@gmail.com	0822956552
Lebogang	UJ	Treasurer	200510277@student.uj.ac.za	0712450368
Musa	UJ	Additional member	kinke@live.co.za	0784682017
Dimakatso	TUT Ga-Rankua	ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Officer	_____	0783269900
Selloane	TUT Ga-Rankua	Branch Representative	_____	0791127928
Richard	WITS	Branch Representative	acts.wits@gmail.com	0766105952
Robyn	WITS	Branch Representative	acts.wits@gmail.com	0828665262
Lerothodi	UJ	Alumni officer	_____	0768463014
Zabenguni	MEDUNSA	Media and Publicity	zyzo2@hotmail.com	0729564127

Plan of Action

For this term we drafted a plan of action for the following events:

Provincial Opening Mass

This event was held early this year at the Cathedral in Pretoria. After the arrival of all the branches, there were; TUT (Rand campus), TUT

(Kgarankuwa), UNW (Mendusa), TUKS, VUT and Wits. An apology, which we received, was from UJ for their absence due to unforeseen circumstances. At this time we had no contacts with anybody from TUT (Soshanguve Campus) so unfortunately they could not be present. Archbishop Daniel celebrated the Mass for us with our Provincial Chaplain, Fr Russell. Branches which were present finally met their chaplain for the first time. Thereafter, as many as we were, even though not as many as we had expected, got together to play games and get to know each other. This is the most interesting part as far as these games were concerned, that when it was time for us to part and go our separate ways, you could feel the threads of binding the participants as they said so-long to each other.

- **ABDC Lifestyle Campaign Rally**

Medusa hosted this event on 24 May 2008 and it was a real success both attendance wise and participation wise. Some branches made it to this event while some could not due to the fact that they had already started their exams. We were pleased that this time apologies were sent, unlike previous events.

The reasons were that the date was postponed from 15 May to 24 May 2008 due to some unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances. All the branches were present except for Wits, Tuks and Soshanguve who could not make it to this event due to various reasons. Besides all this, everything went pretty well accordingly as planned.

- **Tinned food collection**

This has taken place even though we did not do it collectively as the province but individually as branches and it was a real success. The recommendation for the next term for the incoming PEC committee is that it shall be done collectively regionally to strengthen our relationship with the Bishop's office.

- **Sports Day**

This event has not yet taken place; it is going to occur next semester.

Basically it is going to be hosted by TUT (Rand campus) in Pretoria, if this is not possible, it will be hosted by UP or UJ.

Last year's sports day was hosted by TUT Rand Campus and was well organized. Only three branches managed to attend, but the event was a major success despite the poor attendance. We reached the goal of the day, which was to become a better community of friends, because the team-building activities got people more acquainted with one another.

For this year's sports day, we expect a good attendance of all the eight branches of Gauteng, as we have improved the links of communication.

- **Community of Sant'Egidio**

The community has already been established at TUKS and great progress is being made in terms of outreach. Currently they run a School of Peace in Sunnyside, which entails helping disadvantaged, orphaned and refugee children with homework and fun activities every Saturday.

There is also an annual Christmas party that was a great success last year.

A soup kitchen has recently been started in Hillcrest for the homeless and plans are to run it every fortnight.

Future plans are to make the Community provincial and to take all outreach programs to provincial level. Each campus, however, will still be required to run their own individual initiatives, as they know the needs in their surrounding communities.

VUT visited a hospice in Vanderbijlpark to pray with them and then donated some tinned foods. All of this occurred during the rosary month of October last year.

Challenges we had faced

- 1 The PEC of 2007/8 had a lot to deal with when they stepped into office. The previous PEC did not "pass the torch" properly at the previous Provincial AGM, as the majority of them were not even there to be formally disbanded. A lot of damage control was needed as certain Branches felt they were never well informed of Provincial matters and not part of the PEC. A request was made to change the constitution in order for them to communicate directly to the NEC and that the NEC be dissolved. We explained the matter of protocol and uniformity in ACTS, and also that they should give the new PEC a chance to improve the Gauteng lack of uniformity. The matter was taken to ACTS National as requested.
- 2 Communication had been the greatest thorn lying under the skin of Gauteng, being the source of all the problems we had encountered. We agreed at our first PEC meeting that we should ensure that information circulates among the branches by means of emails, sms and cell phones. The issues, which we had, or the misunderstandings, were all cleared during the National visits to all the branches. At this point Gauteng is now working pretty well towards uniformity.
- 3 Lack of attendance at our provincial events is something that is ground-rooted because you may find out that in most cases only familiar faces take an active parts in the running of this vehicle. Fr Michael told us not to let that lead us into any despair as long things get done even if is by the smallest

number of people as long as they are committed. Lastly on the issue of conferences, some branches pointed out some of the things which at times they can not avoid, and which hinders the possibility of attending these events, but we have agreed to work together to smooth things out. Now we hope that our attendance is going to improve from now on.

- 4 At this time we are still nurturing the newborn baby in Vaal, University of North-West (Potchefstroom). Vaal University of Technology has agreed to help Potch so that in the long-run they may be able to be launched.
- 5 The BEC events must be turned into provincial events to avoid unnecessary inconveniences and to make things simpler.

VAAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2007

- Rosary Prayers
- Provincial Sports day
- Visit to Hospice
- Exam Mass
- Confirmation Classes
- Closing Function

JANUARY –MARCH 2008

- First and Senior students recruitment
- Opening Mass and function
- Provincial opening Mass
- Tinned food collection or clothing
- Ash Wednesday
- Palm Sunday collection (first time)

APRIL-JUNE 2008

- Fund Raising and Revival
- ABCD rally
- National Visit
- Brothers of ACTS (Sports and Braai)
- Exam Prayers
- Exam Mass

FUTURE EVENTS JULY-SEPTEMBER 2008

- Camp
- Trip to Ngome
- Get together
- Assisting in launching (UNW Vaal Campus)

TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Second Semester recruitment - ACTS Week
- Sports day
- Social
- Branch AGM
- Provincial AGM
- Cultural Mass
- Outing and Social

Thursdays 17:00 –Choir Practice

-Bible sharing

-General Bonding session

Mass – Sunday 10:30 on Campus

-Every third week – St Josephs (Chaplain's Parish)
other visits to the Seminary and other parishes

KWAZULU NATAL PROVINCIAL REPORT

1. Edgewood
2. Med School
3. UNIZUL
4. DUT Durban
5. UKZN-PMB
6. Mangosuthu
7. Howard
8. DUT-PMB

Plan of Action for the PEC

1. PEC Leadership	Edgewood	16 February 2008
2. ABCD lifestyle rally	Med School	24 May 2008
3. Fun day	UNIZUL	19 April 2008
4. Revival mass	DUT Durban	23 August 2008
5. AGM	UKZN-PMB	15 September 2008
6. Proudly Catholic rally	Edgewood	11 March 2008(during Lent)

PEC MEETINGS

1. 1 ST Meeting- planning events	DUT-Durban	16 March 2008
2. 2 nd meeting- fun day planning	Westville Campus	29 March 2008
3. 3 rd meeting- ABCD planning	Mangosuthu Tech	10 May 2008
4. 4 th meeting- revival and AGM	Howard College	2 August 2008

Activities Achieved

1. Branch visit was only done to Acts DUT (Provincial Prayer)
2. PEC leadership training: Although leadership training was successful not all branches turned up. There were only four branches available out of nine because of a communication breakdown.
3. ABCD Life Style Campaign: the campaign went well and it was held at medical school. It was intertwined with the NEC visit whereby the Branches were reporting.
4. Fun day was cancelled because of the strike which occurred at Mangosuthu Technikon.

Future events:

1. Taize (DUT)
2. AGM (UKZN PMB)
3. Launch (DUT PMB)

FREE STATE PROVINCE

REPORTS OF INDIVIDUAL BRANCHES

UFS Branch - Bloemfontein

Committee members

During the month of September 2007 the branch executive committee was elected consisting of the following members:

<u>PORTFOLIO</u>	<u>NAMES</u>
CHAIRPERSON	JAMES BALENI
VICE CHAIRPERSON	SETJHABA MOFOKENG
SECRETARY	KHANYISILE NGCOBO
ABCD LIFESTYLE	TSHIDI RAKHOBA
PUBLIC RELATIONS	KOALI MATHIBELI
PROJECT OFFICER	BEATA CAMPBELL
INTERNATIONAL LIASON	MALEKHETHO MOHALE
SPIRITUAL OFFICER	JOHN-BOSCO ORURU
FINANCIAL OFFICER/TREASURER	GOMOTSANG TEANE

The Chaplains:

Fr Patrick Towe

Fr Itumeleng Mike Thoabala

At the beginning of this year three committee members resigned due to unforeseen circumstances, they were the Secretary, Alumni, and International Officers. Even though it was difficult to replace their positions, we finally managed. We didn't find it necessary to replace the International Officer Portfolio, because there are no duties identified that cannot be done by anyone of the other committee members.

One of our chaplains, Fr Patrick Towe, had to leave us due to health related complications but we are very fortunate to still have Fr. Mike.

Activities of the branch

Sunday Mass

We celebrate Mass every Sunday at the FG building, with Fr. Mike and Fr. Pat as our chaplains. The attendance has been better than last year.

BEC meeting

BEC meeting is held every Friday in one of the rooms at the SRC offices in the presence of our chaplains.

Home cells

Each hostel has home cell once a week. During the home cell we read the Gospel for the following Sunday and share afterwards.

Confirmation

Three members from UFS branch were Confirmed last year. Some of the ACTS members attended that celebration to show support. This year we have three candidates who are in preparation for Confirmation.

Christmas Mass

We had a Christmas Mass for our second last Mass last year. The reason for this was because we could not be together during Christmas as a family of ACTS.

Orientation of first-years

This took place in January; we registered a significant number of new members. We also visited various hostels to recruit more new members because not all of the first-years attended the orientation day.

Palm Sunday Mass

On Palm Sunday we had a procession into the church with palm leaves and crosses.

Exam Mass

Last year the Exam Mass for the end of the year was held at AWO building and was conducted by Fr Mike and this year it was conducted by Fr. Thabo. The attendance was good and people who stay off campus also came.

Raising of Funds

We had cake sales, raffle draws, handed out donation lists and we even had an auction. The raffle and the donation lists were not as productive as we wanted because not everyone returned the raffle tickets and donation lists.

Marketing and advertising

Marketing of the Association was done through posters that we put around the campus whenever we had any activities planned, we also smsed and called students.

Future Branch activities

- Inter-cell night had to be postponed because we could not find a suitable venue.
- Workshops for Readership, Eucharistic Ministers, ABCD Lifestyle Campaign.

Challenges

- Raising funds was and is our biggest challenge since we do not get any financial support from the SRC offices.
- Poor attendance of meetings and functions by committee members.
- Providing new ACTS t-shirts for this year due to lack of funds.
- Starting home cells in some of the hostels.

CUT Branch

Committee members

During the month of September 2007 the Branch Executive Committee was elected consisting of the following members:

<u>PORTFOLIO</u>	<u>SURNAME and FIRST NAME</u>
CHAIRPERSON	TOHLANG KOTOMA
VICE CHAIRPERSON	HOPOLANG THANYANE
GENERAL SECRETARY	LESEGO SEECO
TREASURER	RETSELISITSOE TSHOLA
LITURGY OFFICER	RAY DIKGWATLHE
ALUMNIA OFFICER	NTSHIYA MOFOKENG
PROJECT OFFICER	NOAH TSHIPI
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER	MR LEFU
ABCD LIFESTYLE OFFICER	KELEBOHILE MOSOEU

The chaplains:

Fr Patrick Towe

Fr Itumeleng Mike Thoabala

Due to unforeseen circumstances the Executive Committee had to be temporarily reshuffled as some members could not take up their responsibilities at the beginning of the year 2008, the following adjustments were made:

Mr Dikgwatlhe replaced Mr Kotoma; Mr Dikgwatlhe was supposed to act as the Chairperson and Liturgy Officer. The office of the Vice Chairperson was left empty.

One of our chaplains, Fr Patrick Towe, had to leave us due to health related complications but we still have Fr. Mike.

Activities of the branch

Sunday Mass

There has been a fair inconsistency in attendance at Mass with numbers ranging from 20 – 35 in attendance every Sunday, it must be stated that some days we do have a very low turn out dependent on whatever activity is taking place around campus or Bloemfontein. We held Mass every Sunday on the academic calendar.

BEC Meetings

Weekly meetings are held every Thursday during lunch hour to evaluate and prepare for the Sunday Mass. The attendance is inconsistent.

Confirmation

Our Chaplain is still conducting classes for Confirmation and we have two members from our Branch in this class.

Orientation of first-years

Our members took part in the orientation day that was organized by the Centre for Counselling under the Campus Ministries. We utilized the event to recruit first-year students to the ACTS community. Members of the Executive

Committee rotated during the registration days for further recruitment, the exercise was evaluated as a success as more than 40 forms were filled in.

Exam Mass

Recently Mass was celebrated at BHP Engineering Building, Sanlam Auditorium on 14 May 2008 during lunch hour. The turn up was overwhelming, the Mass even attracted those students who are not staying in town.

ABCD Lifestyle Campaign

On the 4 February 2008 an ABCD Lifestyle workshop was held by the ABCD Officer Ms K Mosoeu with the assistance of Mr S Matsena, the main objective of this workshop was to brief the Executive Committee about the importance of this campaign and how to present it to the members, the other objective was to prepare the Executive Committee for hostel visitation. During the month of February the Executive Committee managed to visit and present the campaign to inside and outside hostels. The outcome of the visitation was good and has given us the opportunity to market the Association and encourage a healthy living lifestyle amongst the students.

Raising of funds

On 16 September 2007 we had a carwash and the money raised was for the Leadership Conference. On 18 May 2008 there was another carwash at Sacred Heart Cathedral when money was raised for the National Conference. In both these activities the Executive Committee and the congregation responded well. We had several cake sales last year. On 14 March 2008 we had another cake sale for general fundraising. There was a raffle drawn on 27 January 2008, the money also raised for funds. On 11 May 2008 we had a formal dinner.

Marketing and advertising

We market the Association through posters that are put around the campus when we are having activities, we also advertise in the campus newspaper (SPECULUM), and sms and call students.

Challenges

- Our community is recognized by the SRC but we are not allocated a budget.
- There is inconsistency with elected members of the Executive Committee due to the academic climate.
- Inconsistency in attendance to Sunday Mass by members of the community.
- Lack of knowledge of what ACTS is all about.
- Poor home cell attendance.
- A choir was formed earlier this year but the support is not satisfying.
- Loss of first-years and old members.

Acknowledgements

- The ACTS community of the Central University of Technology would like to thank all the Priests of the Archdiocese, local parishes and our ACTS congregation for their support during our events.
- The Sacred Heart community for their support and the resources.
- The Central University of Technology FS student services.

UF - Qwa-Qwa Branch

The Branch is alive since the beginning of this year after Fr Lucky was appointed as Chaplain. At the moment there are 30 members and the Committee which includes the following portfolios; chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer, PRO and ACBD Lifestyle officer. They are busy rebuilding the Branch and recruiting new members. Since the beginning of the year they have held three meetings. One meeting was with the Parish Pastoral Council to outline duties, the history of ACTS and their involvement in the Parish. They are working in cooperation with the Parish Youth Association. Future events are a Proudly Catholic day in August and Education day in September. At the moment the progress is slow but this will improve with time.

REPORT OF PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

The Provincial Executive Committee consists of eight members

Annual National Conference

During the winter holidays of 2007 we managed to send approximately 20 members to the National Conference which was held at Vincent Palloti Farm, Queenstown. The conference was evaluated as a success. The recommendation is that the organizers must try to improve the accommodation and catering services.

Sports Day

On 10 September 2007 we held a sports day at CUT grounds as an activity of the province, we invited local parishes and, together with them, we had a successful day.

Cultural Mass

On 16 September 2007 we had a cultural event, which was also a provincial activity. It was held at UFS.

Leadership Conference

Four delegates were sent to attend the Leadership Conference that was held at Koinonia Conference Centre in Johannesburg. The Conference was held during the December holidays. It has been evaluated as a successful event.

Annual retreat

ACTS CUT and UFS BRANCHES managed to attend the annual Provincial Retreat organized by our chaplain, Fr Mike Thoabala. This was held on March 7 to 9 2008 at Assisi Mission near Lady Brand hosted by Fr Leuta from Bethlehem Diocese. The theme for the retreat was "Health by the Cross". Attendance was good and approximately forty-five people were present.

Ash Wednesday Mass

Holy Mass was celebrated at the Sacred Heart Cathedral to mark the beginning of Lent, our members responded to this celebration.

Tinned food collection

During the month of May 2008, we had a tinned food and clothes collection. This event was not very successful, because it was mostly food rather than clothes that was donated.

Youth Rally

The Youth Rally took place on Saturday 31 May 2008 at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The theme was "Building your life on self-respect". We had students from different schools, people from parishes around and outside Bloemfontein. Gino was visiting us at this time of the Rally. There were more than 450 people present.

Future Provincial activities

- Sports day
- Cultural Mass
- High School Campaign
- Qwa-Qwa branch Visitation
- Revival
- Launching of two Branches, one in Upington and the other in Potchefstroom.

Challenges

- Funds and transport

Relationship between Branches and other Parishes

There is a good relationship between the two Branches as we attend and support each others' functions. There are good relations between us and other denominations as our Chaplains are part of the campus ministries which keep us well informed on campus religious activities. Recently CUT Branch took part in the interdenominational praise and worship which was held in February this year.

POLICY FORMULATION

- **Racism**
- **Xenophobia**

• THE EXPERIENCE OF RACISM

Definition:

- Racism is an ideology constructed negatively by humans;
- Racism derives from the 'class system';
- Racism is imperialism;
- Insecurity leads to racism.

Way forward:

- Mobilising white or European Catholic students to be a part of ACTS;
- Change begins with individuals;
- Participation;
- Engaging and having time to understand your neighbour.
- Practice Ubuntu (humanity);
- Change the system;
- Forget the past and move on;
- Tolerate one another;
- Decolonise your mind;
- Emancipate yourself from mental slavery;
- Respect
- A common medium of communication should be established;
- Take an opportunity to know and understand individuals;
- Stop being ignorant;
- Stop being anti-social;
- Be confident and boost self-esteem;
- Accept ourselves;
- Stop being stereotyped.

XENOPHOBIA

What is xenophobia?

- Xeno – Greek word meaning stranger
- Phobia – Fear

Discrimination:

- Conflict between different ethnic groups
- Fear of strangers expressed through ethnicity
- Inhumanity to people outside one's territory
- Indifference
- Source of hatred classified as a psychological factor so that one can be socially accepted
- Fear caused by ignorance and poverty
- Black on black violence / hatred
- Mental colonisation of the state of mind
- Self-hatred
- We, as South Africans, 'think' we are better than Africans

What Causes Xenophobic Attacks?

- Poverty and unemployment
- Inequalities between the rich and the poor
- Capacity of the economy of South Africa (structural employment)
- Inefficiency of the government (influx)
- Limited resources
- South Africans are lazy
- Superiority vs inferiority
- Lack of support from the government
- Nepotism
- The government
- Lack of morality

- Issues that were not dealt with post 1994
- 'Shed-blood' mentality so that the government listens
- South Africans are selfish
- Lack of control mechanism
- Incompetence in the Home Affairs Department

Solutions:

- Government should implement policies
- The need to accept and assist fellow African brothers and sisters
- Review our standards
- Force implementation of policies
- Approach things differently instead of violence
- Respect

CELL GROUPS

CELL GROUP 1

- Mohapi Phosholi
- Bonolo Moagi
- Dineo Mxoli
- Dineo Ramachakela
- Lebogang Masha
- Caritus Maselesele
- Mmathabo Auta
- Teboho Mathibedi
- Matsomane Koboko
- Mokete Sekopo
- Benunu Makoe
- Molepo Kgaogelo
- Nkosiephayo Mahlobo

CELL GROUP 2

- Toka Leuta
- Keke Matsoabudi
- Sister Boitumelo Wadikgosi
- Nombulelo Mpangiso
- Ntsika Kabela
- Nthabeleng Hatlane
- Nntle Mensele
- Obakeng Pule
- Cyril Olathunji
- Paballo Mnguni
- Pheha Khanakha
- Qinisile Dlamini
- Ramatelile Litsietsi

CELL GROUP 3

- Kele Mosoeu
- Vincent Seboko
- Majosi Matlhape
- Dineo Nkholise
- Ray Digwatthe
- Resty Mushi
- Robben Folkard
- Santon Morai
- Sekai Tombe
- Seleka Lerato
- Sello Matsena
- Sphindile Shoba
- Tilana Siphamandla

CELL GROUP 4

- Lesego Seeco
- Tshepo Peni
- Gino Lekhelebane
- Tshidi Tshola
- Ebetsamang Thupea
- Katlego Matseke
- Bakang Mpolokeng
- Beata Campbell
- Brenda Boyce
- Carol Makhananisa
- Crystel Mpisi
- Mmalekgetho Mohale
- James Baleni
- Kakgiso Choenyana
- Katlego Nthabu

CELL GROUP 5

- Gubevu Maduna
- Kerileng Molapo
- Kgotsofala Matabane
- Koali Mathibeli
- Koketso Ntshayi
- Kolo Mosai
- Lebogang Mashamaite
- Lehlehonolo Molefe
- Lerato Seopela
- Lesego Kekana
- Lesego Molefe
- Lorraine Mashego
- Mmathabo Auta
- Keoleboga Maropeng