

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TERTIARY STUDENTS



SIXTEENTH ACTS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE
REPORT
ST JOSEPH MAFIKENG
JULY 2009

***“ACTS evangelising
in the context of South Africa”***

IMCS

International Movement of Catholic Students

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SIXTEENTH ACTS ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE - ST JOSEPH MAFIKENG 2009
 Catholic students responding to the signs of the times: *“ACTS evangelising in the context of South Africa”*

Time	Monday 29 June	Tuesday 30 June	Wednesday 01 July	Thursday 02 July	
07h30 – 08h00		Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	
08h00-09h00		Breakfast			
09h00-10h00		* March in Mafikeng Opening Mass: Bishop of Kimberley * NEC Welcome * National Chaplain’s Address * Greetings 1 IMCS Pan Africa 2 Botswana	<u>Mass</u> : Fr G Pugin <u>Response</u> : Catholic Image of God on campus <u>Study Session 2</u> : Leadership as an African woman – Ms Wauchope Provincial Reports	Exposure Visit	
10h00-11h00					
11h00-11h30					
11h30-12h00					
12h00-12h30					
12h30-15h00		Lunch and Free Time / “30 Minute Workshops by Chaplain			
15h00-17h00		<u>Branch Reports</u> * Walk About <u>Evangelisation</u> : <u>Study Session 1</u> : Catholic Image of God – Bishop S Brislin <u>Response</u> : Open Retreat / ACTS Week / Week of Prayer	<u>Study Session 3</u> : Evangelisation as Healing – Fr Pat Towe Provincial Reports	<u>Statutory Session National Reports</u> *NEC Report *Financial Report Mass	
17h00-18h30	Registrations				
18h30-20h00		Supper			
20h00-21h00	Icebreakers & Ground rules	Prayer Session	Cell Groups		
21h00-21h30	Expectations	Cell Group	Vigil and Confession	Bash	

FOREWORD

The Sixteenth ACTS Annual National Conference was held at St Joseph, Mafikeng, in July 2009 with the theme “ACTS Evangelising in the Context of South Africa”.

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
- Spiritual Sessions
- Study Session
- Chaplains’ Workshops
- Statutory Session

The theme of the Study Session was as a result of the discernment carried out by the ACTS Branch Leaders who attended the ACTS Annual Leadership and Training Conference. The identified signs of the times included “Youth Evangelisation” and “Economic Policy”. At this Conference only Youth Evangelisation was dealt with which included the following:

- The Catholic Image of God
- Healing and Reconciliation

One realises that such a Conference can only touch the tip of the iceberg when coming to Youth Evangelisation and it is clear that much more work remains to be done especially at a Branch level.

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!

ACTS General Secretary
Molahlehi Sonopo

GROUND RULES

- English as the medium of communication throughout the conference
- Cell phone on silent
- Punctuality
- Respect
- Keep it as quiet as possible
- Clean up after yourself
- Be considerate at all time
- Limited movement during sessions
- Maximum participation
- Smoke outside
- Be security conscious
- KISS
- No stealing
- Mingle

EXPECTATIONS

- Being Christian and experiencing true love!
- Have fun and make friends!
- New and amended constitution
- Learning from others
- ACTS history
- Spiritual awakening among tertiary students
- Role model for future students on campus
- ACTS websites
- Understanding the teachings of the church
- Good food
- Discussion on the legalization of prostitution
- Good communication amongst branches
- Gain more knowledge about IMCS

SUMMARY REPORT

DAY 1: Monday 29 June 2009

The day started with the delegates arriving from different provinces at 13:00. The registration commenced on time and was facilitated by Mr Sello Matsena with the help of the other NEC members and Fr Michael Hagan. Just before the ice breaker of various interesting games, which was organised by Miss Mushi Resty with her special talent, the National President of ACTS introduced all the members of the NEC to the delegates who attended the conference. Afterward Mr Sello Matsena took over to introduce a session that helped the delegates to come up with expectations and ground rules.

Day 2: Tuesday 30 July 2009

The day started with morning prayer held in the chapel at 7:30 followed by breakfast. After which delegates started singing and chanting out to the street in the beginning of a march which was very jubilant and lively. Different choruses were sung. The march started from St. Joseph's Centre and then on via the C.B.D of the town to the church. The town came to a stand-still as the marchers progressed through the highly populated town with people leaving their things behind to see what was taking place and they were very fascinated by the singing and the messages, which were carried by the participants.

The second part of the First Session was the Mass celebrated by Bishop Erwin Hecht of Kimberley. After Mass, Fr Mike introduced the delegates to the Conference, as the ACTS National President Ms Lebogang Masha officially opened the Conference and welcomed Bishop Erwin Hecht, all the students from various campuses and the chaplains. Then followed an address from IMCS presented by Fr Francis from Botswana who outlined the challenges faced by the youth, the church and the society of Botswana at large, mainly the problem of HIV/AIDS, suicide, rape and murder amongst the youth. He mentioned that the students of Botswana are still dependent and that there is a new university in Botswana where they are working hard to establish ACTS.

Fr Mike gave the National Chaplain's address in which he outlined the purpose of the ACTS Annual National Conference. He also talked about the challenges that students and society are faced with in the country. The challenges were identified as:

- The South African economic policy
- Academic exclusion
- The increasing gap between the rich and the poor.

Fr Michael concluded by wishing everyone a Christ-filled Annual National Conference.

The Second Session consisted of "walk about" branch reports in which students interacted and shared their views about branch life, programmes and activities in their respective campuses.

Bishop Brislin of Kroonstad presented the First Study Session on the topic: "The Catholic Image of God", this discussion sought to answer the following key questions:

1. How do we know God?
2. Who then is God?
3. Why do we often have a wrong understanding of God?
4. Why is the Gospel good news?
5. Is there judgment, purgatory, hell?
6. What does this mean for us?

The Bishop answered the above questions using mainly biblical quotations and the teachings of the Catholic Church. He highlighted the difference between the Old Testament and New Testament. He went on to say that in the New Testament there is the living word, healing and mysteries. The Bishop further emphasised that God has infinite love for his people. In that sense God identifies himself in different images and is not a judgmental God.

The day concluded with a night prayer and a small group discussion by different cell groups.

Day 3: Wednesday 01 July 2009

The day started with a morning prayer, which touched the hearts of many students, followed by Mass, which was celebrated by Fr Graham Pugin, the Chaplain of UCT. The Mass was great fun, with songs of rich diversity, having all students participating, showing and portraying unity amongst us as students.

After the Mass, we gathered for the first study session of the day with the title "*Leadership as an African Woman*", which was presented by Miss Ntombi Wauchope. This topic highlighted many issues which young women are facing within the country, and was very informative. The session portrayed the best way of being a proud black woman leader, and also advised students not to settle for anything but for everything; this was inspiring. After lunch, students went to the Chaplains' Thirty Minute Workshop.

The Provincial Reports by the respective Provincial NEC members followed this session and was very informative. Most of them shared their views on the successes and failures they had had at the respective provinces.

Day 4: Thursday 3 July 2009

The day started with morning prayer, which was followed by breakfast. For the exposure visit, people were transported by taxis, which were hired by the NEC. We had the opportunity to visit the Carmelite Sisters' Convent where a Sister shared her experiences of being a Religious, with the students. Thereafter, we had the

opportunity to visit the Mafikeng Game Park. It was a wonderful moment in the park where most people managed to see animals they had only seen on television.

The afternoon session was taken up by statutory reporting which included the presentation of the ACTS National General Secretary Report and ACTS National Financial Report. Mass followed the Reports. After the Mass delegates rushed for the supper since they were eager to go for the bash after super.

Day 5: Friday 4 July 200

The day started off with a morning prayer followed by the presentation by Sister Aine Hughes of the Siyabhabha Trust on the Catholic Youth Leadership Research Manual. Thereafter, Fr Michael Hagan, the National Chaplain, presented the ABc Manual of FHI.

Day 6: Saturday 4 July 2009

Departure

OPENING SESSION

ACTS NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS WELCOME

By: Lebogang Masha

Bishop Hecht, National Chaplain, National Committee Members, Colleagues, friends and all of you, my brothers and sisters, gathered here.

It is a great privilege and pleasure for me to welcome you all to the Sixteenth ACTS Annual National Leadership and Training Conference. My first and very pleasant task, in addressing you from the Chair, is to thank you all very sincerely for the high honour you have done me by electing me to the office of National President of ACTS. I have felt that there were others who had merited the honour more highly, once again I thank you.

This Conference is aimed mainly at Leadership Training. This includes becoming familiar with the methodology and policies of ACTS, as well as developing new policies and programmes. Thus far, amongst others, our policies include HIV/AIDS prevention strategies and currently the ACTS NEC is involved with the development of a training manual for the Diocesan Youth Leaders in partnership with Siyabhabha Trust. Through these interventions we therefore hope, for example, to increase the efficacy of our HIV/AIDS projects e.g. awareness and education campaigns, through the "ABCD Lifestyle Campaign" that we present in our various provinces, and by supporting families affected by HIV/AIDS through our out-reach programmes. As part of this conference, visiting the Mother Teresa Hospice in Yeoville, will help delegates to observe the reality of HIV/AIDS. Especially as today we are celebrating World AIDS Day, we therefore support, remember and pray for those that are affected and infected with this virus. Once again, this Conference is primarily for training leaders and it therefore becomes important to emphasize that the Conference is mainly for the newly elected committees across the country.

The ACTS Annual National Conference held in Mpumalanga at Maria Trost in Lydenburg, where the 2008/09 NEC was elected, gave us a mandate especially regarding the need to create an ACTS website. The ACTS National Media and Publicity Officer as well as the ACTS National President are currently working on this challenge and, hopefully, we will have this website launched before the end of our term of office. Added to this, we plan to have an "ABCD Lifestyle Campaign" Rally organized nationally.

The office of the National President managed to witness the much anticipated launch of ACTS CPUT Cape Town Campus in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the ACTS Manual of Procedures, I can also mention that new branches are in the process of being formed at the following campuses: Upington, Butterworth, Potchefstroom, and North West Campus Vaal.

ACTS National was also able to be present at the SACBC National Pastoral Forum which was held in August 2008. The theme of the forum included issues of evangelization which were vigorously discussed.

This Leadership and Training Conference is also the forum at which the ACTS National Mission and Vision Statement, developed at the first NEC meeting held in Cape Town during the weekend of 25 – 26 October 2008 for the term 2008/2009, is officially introduced to the nation through the various delegates gathered here today. In arriving at this Mission Statement, members of the National Executive Committee recognised the following signs of the times as:

Racism
Tolerance
Xenophobia
Political instability- affection
Unemployment rate
Identity (culture)
Evangelization and
Consciousness

Therefore our Mission and Vision Statement reads as follows:

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

Developing dynamic visionary leaders who are aware of their cultural identity and who encourage fair leadership, tolerance, and non-racism and anti-xenophobic practices.

Evangelizing through African culture in order to experience GOD.

Encouraging and facilitating an environment which builds and develops the youth to actively participate in all spheres of society.”

We are gathered here this week to ask ourselves what the Living Christ is saying to us through the current signs of the time as young people / students, what the living God is saying to us with regard to evangelization. As in 1994, our hope remains that we will live life to the fullest (Jn10:10) whilst the youth of South Africa today is faced with many challenges, such as the current political squabbles in the country that are affecting us, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, unemployment etc. The resistance shown by the youth of 1976 was not just any ordinary event but a true indication that society cannot exist without the input of young people. I therefore challenge you to stand up and become countable to your rights.

We hope and believe that we are all going to have a wonderful and sharing Leadership and Training Conference.

I conclude with this quote

“For those to whom much is given, much is expected”

ACTS NATIONAL CHAPLAIN'S WELCOME

By Fr Michael Hagan Isch

It is my great pleasure to welcome everyone here today, the Bishop of Kimberley Bishop Erwin Hecht OMI, the Dean of this area, Fr David, Chaplains, students and people from this Province. We would like to welcome in a special way the delegates from the two ACTS Branches which were launched during the past year, namely: Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Cape Town) and North West University (Vaal).

As was mentioned in 2008 during the ACTS Annual National Conference the process of appointing a new ACTS National Chaplain was re-opened and nominations can be submitted to Bishop Z P Mvemve or to the National Chaplain. The matter of the new National Chaplain was also highlighted during the University Chaplains' Conference which was held in May 2009.

We always have to remember that ACTS is a movement of life. ACTS started in the midst of many difficulties in December 1993 and today is present in almost all the Institutions of Higher Education within South Africa. ACTS is a grass-roots movement tasked to discern the signs of the times in the context of the new South Africa and to develop meaningful responses for Catholic students.

As a student movement ACTS has the responsibility to engage with the issues of the Church and society, and by so doing, is empowering students to make a contribution to build a new country and a new Africa. Whilst, on the one hand ACTS is very fragile, it is also a success story. This can be seen from the many young professionals who are already making a difference within the government, NGO's and business; for example, Fr. Michael Deeb met a former ACTS member who is now an advisor to the Foreign Affairs Ministry. ACTS also has, from among its alumni, two priests, a Religious Brother and three seminarians. We hope that in the future we will have people from ACTS who will be members of parliament and this will be of benefit to the Church of South Africa.

Two issues were highlighted as relevant signs of the times during the discussions in December 2008 at the ACTS National Leadership and Training Conference, namely evangelization and poverty linked to economic policy.

- Evangelization because the students coming to university do not have a deep encounter with Christ nor a meaningful Church experience. *Today it is not whether students go to Church or not, but whether the youth in the future will want to be Christians*; hopefully some of the discussions of the Conference will help to enlighten us.
- The other question raised, that of poverty and economic policy, comes from the experience that there is poverty amongst students. The gap between the rich and the poor is increasing, the rich have the best of facilities, whilst the poor suffer the worst because of economic policies. The Catholic Social Teachings

give direction as to a possible response and, hopefully, a relevant response will emerge from ACTS in years to come. Poverty and students / ACTS Branches not having funds certainly affects ACTS and, at this Conference, we hear that branches like TUT (SO) and TUT (Garankuwa) have been affected by the lack of funding.

Finally, it is with great joy that I see so many students and chaplains here this week. Let this week be a time of grace! A very special time of learning and sharing hopefully bringing us closer to God. Build up each other and become people who are positive towards each other so that we may experience and feel that we belong to the Kingdom of God.

Fr Michael Hagan ISch
ACTS National Chaplain

SPIRITUAL SESSIONS

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

- Daily Morning Prayer (conducted by the students)
- Daily Mass:
 - Tuesday - Opening Mass celebrated by Bishop Erwin Hecht
 - Wednesday – Mass celebrated by Fr J Ndaba
 - Thursday – Mass celebrated by Fr B Graham
 - Friday – Closing Mass celebrated by Fr D Sehlabaka
- Prayer Service (conducted by the students)
- Night Vigil with individual confessions
- Chaplains' Thirty Minute Workshops
- Chaplains' Forum

STUDY SESSION

- **The Catholic Image of God by Bishop Steven Brislin**
- **Healing and Reconciliation by Fr Patrick Towe OMI**

THE CATHOLIC IMAGE OF GOD

By: Bishop Steven Brislin

How do we know God?

Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God. Jesus is God, and therefore to know Christ is to know God: "...to know me is to know the Father". (Jn 4: 9-11)

How do we know Jesus? In the Old Testament, Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament. (Matt 5:17-19) He does not contradict the basic message of the Old Testament. Therefore, in the Old Testament we find indications, signs, which point towards God, but they are incomplete and imperfect in relation to the full Revelation found in Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament the living Word speaks to us through the teachings of Jesus, his actions, the great mysteries of his life, and the teachings of the Apostles.

We know Jesus through having a living relationship with him: through prayer, the Church, the Sacraments.

Who then is God?

St John: God is Love (1 Jn 4:7-11)

St Paul: who/what can separate us from the Love of God? (Rom 8:35-39)

Rom: when we cannot pray as we should, the Holy Spirit prays in us with groans (Rom 8:26-27), Abba, Father (Gal 4:6)

Jesus teaches us: forgiveness of the prostitute because she has loved much (Lk 7:36-50); the prodigal son (Lk 15: 11-32); the lost sheep (Lk 15:1-7); that he has not come to judge the world but to save the world (Jn 12:47-48); he weeps over Jerusalem (Mk 23: 37-39)

The teaching does not contradict the Old Testament teaching: Ezek: the Lord does not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that the sinner repent and return to God (Ezek 18:23-32); God loves us as a mother loves her child, but even if she does not love her child God will always love us for he has carved us in the palm of his hands (Is 49:14-16)); even when the Israelites disobey God in the desert he saves them: the bronze snake (Numbers 21:5-9); Ps: even if he disobeys me I will not turn from him (Ps 89:30-35)

The teachings of both Old Testament and New Testament are about love, forgiveness, the protection of God, God's involvement in history, he is a personal God i.e. in relationship with me and you, approachable (Deut 4:7)

But the most definitive revelation of God are the great mysteries of the New Testament: the incarnation, long promised in the Old Testament - God is with us, identifies himself with us, in solidarity with us, not far from our human reality:

happineses and sufferings; he has “pitched his tent” with us, lives with us (Jn 1:11-18). And the Paschal mystery in which we see the extent to which God goes to convey his love, fulfils Jesus’ saying: greater love has no man than to lay down his life for another (Jn 15:12-17; cf Rom 5:5-11). Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection convey to us LOVE. Through his opened arms he reconciles God with man

He is present among us: he promised to remain with us (Mt 28:16-22) and is present to us in the Church (cf Mt 18:20), and in the Sacraments

Why do we have the wrong understanding of God?

Parents may have used punishment by God as a way of getting us to do things;
Bad image of others, especially Father - absent or abusive; breakdown of the Christian family
Old Testament can be frightening, with wars, slaughter etc
Wrong understanding of Christ’s death: vengeance, satisfaction
A poor understanding of the Book of Revelation
Our own guilt - our lack of true love (betray and betrayed)
Problem of suffering, especially innocent suffering (Book of Job, cf. Ps72):
Misunderstanding of judgement in this world (cf Matt 5:45)

Why is the Gospel Good News?

Because of God’s unconditional love (cf Ps 89 above);
because of forgiveness and reconciliation (Col 1:18-23);
because of resurrection (Rom 5:17)
It is a message of hope and life, our only true foundation in life

Is there judgement, is there punishment, is there purgatory, is there hell?

yes, both the Bible and Jesus tell us so
the Church teaches that there is hell
the Church does not teach that anyone has been sent to hell
there is judgement, because we will see ourselves in the light of God’s unconditional love, his goodness, his forgiveness and we will experience shame at what we are and what we have done; that shame will be the most painful of all punishments, brought on by ourselves;

there is hell: those who deliberately and with full-knowledge cut themselves off from God. It does not mean that God does not love them, it means they have rejected God’s love themselves; the great pain of hell is separation from God.

Judgement: Mt 22:13; 26: 30-46; CCC 1038-1041

Purgatory: 1 Cor 3:15; 1 Pet 1:7; 2 Mac 12:46; CCC 1030-1032

Hell: Matt 5:22; 5:29; 10:28; 13:42; Mk9:43-48; CCC 1033-1037

What does this mean for us?

To acknowledge that we are sinners, weak and in need of a Saviour. Cannot save ourselves;

to repent of our sins: the difference between Peter and Judas - repentance, humility. Judas was filled with pride;

to acknowledge sin to be sin: not to try and say that something is not a sin just because I like doing it, it is part of me, or everyone else is doing it;

to turn to God in repentance: does not mean a guilt trip, self-flagellation etc. It does mean expressing dependency on God and a commitment to discipleship.

Call of Christ, the Church, is a call to conversion (Lk 13:23-24); personal and intimate relationship with Christ; making the fundamental choice for God

To avoid the Seven Cardinal Sins, and to grow in virtue:

Cardinal Sin

Lust
Gluttony
Greed
Acedia (“apathy”)despair, sloth
Wrath
Envy
Pride (Vainglory)

Counter-acting virtue

Chastity
Temperance
Charity
Diligence (hope)
Patience
Kindness
Humility

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

By: Fr Patrick Towe OMI

St Paul describes Jesus' action of love as a ministry of 'Reconciliation' and he appeals to us through his text 'Be reconciled to God' to be ministers of this reconciliation to others. Reconciliation also implies healing. This is what the cross is about. It is the greatest act of reconciliation & healing the world has ever known. Christ reconciled the world to himself. And this is still a world torn apart with conflict (cf. John W. de Grunchy, 'Reconciliation: Restoring justice'.) in so many places. Reconciliation is a theme that demands constant consideration in the light of our context in ACTS as a Christ centered community of friends, reading the signs of the times in the light of the gospel and of our African culture.

For Christians, Reconciliation, Healing and Evangelization are all at the centre of our faith. The reason is not difficult to discern, for the gospel is about overcoming alienation and estrangement between all of us and creation. This has social and political consequences as well as some more obvious interpersonal ones. (de Grunchy p1). Reconciliation has to do with the healing of relationships (ibid p2). As Christians we are called to embody reconciliation in the world. Theologically speaking, De Grunchy says, reconciliation is about the tangible experience of living together in community and refers to the sacramental embodiment of a new humanity As Christians and members of ACTS we are then agents of reconciliation, representing its embodiment in the world and history, and proclaimers of a new evangelization that moves away from a simply sacramentalized community to a truly catechized and evangelizing community of faith. In the letter of Pope Paul VI on Evangelization, he states that we should never underestimate the evangelizing value of an ordinary Christian life lived well.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission called reconciliation a complex and long-term process with many dimensions. It underlined the vital importance of the multi-layered healing of human relationships in post-apartheid South Africa. Archbishop Tutu himself spoke of the necessity of reconciliation as the 'stuff' of practical politics. And I would say that it is the 'stuff' of practical love that breaks through the silence and speaks its truth. It breaks through the 'niceness' in South Africa which we all show towards each other, black and white, while underneath there is a different story.

Making such a breakthrough will involve the cross. But we know that is not the end of the story. The cross finds its culmination in the Resurrection and celebration of the Ascension. This celebrates Jesus' return to his Father and sitting down at His right hand. The job is done. The Victory is won. Now all that remains is for this mystery to be worked out in our lives. The plan continues but demands our co-operation. 'Go therefore and make disciples...' Matt 28:19ff.

So today I would like to offer an invitation for us all to enter into this process of cooperation with God's plan of Reconciliation, Evangelization and Healing from a different perspective than we might have thought of or done before. It is, I think, from a deeper perspective which will both challenge and stretch us but, like the cross, will be worthwhile and full of joy, the joy that Christ wishes will be full and complete for each of us and all of us as His people

The theme politicians and political activists chose for the first Conference of Independent African States in Accra, Ghana on 15 April 1958 was 'Reconciliation'. The conference was significant in that it was the first pan-African conference held on

African soil. It represented, according to a short piece in City Press on 24 May, 'the collective expression of African people's disgust with colonialism and imperialism, and their collective will to see those forms of oppression permanently removed'. This conference called for the founding of Africa Day, a day to 'mark each year the onward progress of the liberation movement and to symbolize the determination of the people of Africa to free themselves from foreign domination and exploitation'.

Five years later, on 25 May 1963, leaders of thirty-two independent African states met to form the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The primary aims of the OAU were to promote the unity and solidarity of Africa, to secure Africa's long-term economic future and to rid the continent of all remaining forms of colonialism. By then more than two-thirds of the continent had been liberated from colonial rule. At this historic meeting the date of Africa day was changed from 15 April to 25 May and was declared African Liberation Day.

The OAU initiatives paved the way for the birth of the African Union (AU) which formally replaced the OAU in July 2002. The African Union has greater powers to promote African economic, social, and political integration and a stronger commitment to democratic principles.

Today Africa Day is celebrated throughout the world. It is a day to celebrate but also to critically assess the failures, challenges and the lessons learnt, for the sake of a better future for the continent's people. A great deal took place all over the country to celebrate this day and to carry out such critical reflection. Ntombi, my colleague who will also be addressing you at this conference, and I, attended a lecture at UFS to mark the day. It was given by Prof Achilles Mbembe and was entitled 'Is Africa Ready for Democracy?' He spoke of the necessity to look for a future and a democracy beyond the received narrative of past colonialism, a totally new paradigm, an African paradigm arising from simply being human. He said that while South Africa has changed not enough has changed. The poor as well as being deprived of life and power are deprived of any ongoing possibilities for the future. They are deprived not only of a voice but of permanence in such instability. He pointed out that South Africa is still a nation of too many black people with nothing. South Africa still yearns for democracy and a future that is aligned to the possibility of all being fully human, alive, and equal and recognized for their innate God-given dignity.

A beautiful poem was distributed at the lecture which spoke of Africa, mother Africa as the cradle of humankind. Africa is the place, too, of our own evangelization activity in ACTS in our Provinces and Nationally. We are called to read the signs of the times in a world which is in such need in terms of the economic crisis. It is a world in need of redemption and liberation from economic selfishness, greed, violence, poverty, hunger, and the abuse of women, otherwise known as sexism. Here in South Africa recently there was a Conference in Johannesburg on 'The Abuse of Women' which found that 48% of all men in South Africa in a relationship with a woman, abused them in one way or another.

As well as this, since my arrival in South Africa in January 2002, I have been continually struck by the enormous transition that has taken place in the country since the apartheid days. Great strides towards equality and inclusion have been made. However, as is clear to all, much still remains to be done to promote a society based on justice and equal access to the resources of the country to enable all to have adequate housing, education, work, health-care and recreation. The great toll of the HIV/Aids pandemic continues to suck the lifeblood from our young people, the poor

and the most vulnerable. There is however on the other side a great deal of good will, and a real desire for transformation in the country and a great impetus at this time among churches and government to try to bring this about.

From my experience in regard to the people with whom I have ministered, the situation of the UFS which you all know about (Rietz last year, resignation of Vice-Rector and Chancellor, Prof Fourie, and Armentum just a while ago), leads me to believe the issue of racism is playing a key part in holding us back from any future progress and indeed from any effective evangelization and healing. The years of the effects of the apartheid system have left great scars and there is need for much healing as underlined by the TRC. This is the case for black, coloured and whites – (terms that carry within them oppressive tones due to the categorizing in apartheid days). Each group has been hurt in different ways. Those who were oppressed and those who were the oppressors need to recover from the effects of their positions in the oppressive system. This needs to be done not from a perspective of blame and recrimination but one of healing and reconciliation. For all involved it means a reclaiming of our full humanity. All (both oppressed and oppressors) have been denied access to the fullness of their God-given humanity and it is this that needs to be fully reclaimed and celebrated. This is what today is about.

It is now time for a stretch and I'd like you to listen to a song from Bob Marley. Please see if you know it and listen to the words. (Play Bob Marley's Redemption Song).

I think with all I said at the beginning and all that is happening at this time there is a great synergy taking place. The Synod on Africa is on 'Reconciliation'. Personal and communal conversion is central to the ongoing transformation, evangelization and healing of South Africa and the world in which we are called to co-operate with Christ in bringing about the Reign of God. It is then no mistake that we are here today looking at these issues at this conference. It is a time of Kyros and also a time of Kenosis. A time when, according to the invitation of our ACTS Rally on 9 May in Bloemfontein, we are invited to choose life according to Jn. 10:10 and are invited to look at God's fidelity and our response to that fidelity.

As evangelizers we are called to become fully human, fully Christian, and then fully saints. This is an ongoing process of growth in relationship with Jesus Christ. (cf. The Universal Call to Holiness Vat 11). (The RCIA shows us that such a growth in relationship with Christ is necessary and goes through the various periods and stages).

This relationship like any other and perhaps more than any other will challenge us to growth in our humanity. This is the call of Ash Wednesday when at the distribution of ashes we are invited 'to turn away from sin and believe in the Gospel'. Here I understand sin in its broadest sense as structured sin or oppression which is based on a class and capitalistic society which keeps us all separate and at enmity with each other so that we can be easily exploited and manipulated to do what the system wants, to compete, rather than cooperate, to win rather than lose, above all not to think. All is completely contrary to the African spirit of 'ubuntu'.

This type of oppressive society sets us up to be affected by many types of oppressions, classicism being the basic one. Flowing from this and aimed at keeping it in place are racism, sexism, gay oppression, Jewish oppression, oppression of young people, ageism, mental-health oppression, oppression of people with disabilities, a distorted nationalism, working-class oppression, middle-class oppression, owning-

class oppression, oppression or rape of the earth or environment producing global warming, men's oppression, Catholic oppression & the oppression of priests and any oppression based on religion.

A process called Re-Evaluation Co-Counselling aims to eliminate all these oppressions and the end of any enmity based on religion. Pope John Paul was a great ambassador for this and Pope Benedict is just back from his Middle East visit. He, building on the work of his predecessor, is doing a great deal to bring about such healing of wounds based on religious enmity.

Re-Evaluation Co-Counselling and the Gospel, I believe, call us to end all oppression – Isaiah and Luke give us our scriptural charter as Christians for this. Once one is committed to the elimination of one type of oppression, one has to be committed to the elimination of all of them.

Here we are specifically looking at racism. The key to this elimination is listening and being listened to. This is a listening that entails the attention of the whole of our being with an attitude of love. We are called to behold Christ in each one of us, He who beholds us in love. We distinguish the distress or what we might term bad or distorted behaviour, from the person, who is inherently good according to our God given dignity. All of us are equal as well as completely intelligent, cooperative, zestful and human. This gets occluded as we grow up and the natural healing capacity is interrupted. You notice how a baby behaves when he or she is hurt or upset. It cries, rages and / or shakes. As long as a person who is there is not distracted by this distress or restimulated by it nor tries to stop it, but relaxedly allows him or her to cry or discharge and do whatever he or she needs to, the child is soon back to its radiant self; at peace and totally engaged in the universe and all around, naturally interested and naturally charming and engagingly human.

Re-Evaluation Co-Counselling gives us a set of tools to reclaim this capacity and reclaim our inherent goodness. It enables us to become experts in the art of reconciliation. It enables us to create a space, a sacred space, a 'cenaculum' (an upper room) within which the process of reconciliation, with total confidentiality, can take place. Whatever a person shares in a session of a personal nature is treated with complete respect and confidentiality. When someone speaks of their personal material in a small group, in a large group or in twos, we are not at liberty to repeat what we hear. It is a sacred gift. We hold it in confidence. If we wish to refer to a person's session or material, as it is called, we need to ask their permission first. We are not to raise it with them afterwards or to speak to anyone else about what was shared without the person's explicit permission.

Men's oppression hits all men and our male students very hard. This is demonstrated by the fact that from a young age we are told not to cry or to be close to any other man and to remain isolated and alone. We hear such messages as: - 'be strong; big boys don't cry'; 'don't be so sissy holding his hand.' We men thereby become ideal fodder for war, violence, indolence and become apparently emotionless. This is not how we are naturally. We are completely human and have a full range of emotions, completely male emotions, and are completely capable of close loving relationships without being sexual despite what society says. The priest's vow (promise) of chastity based on Christ's own example witnesses to this reality in a world that says this is mad and thus is totally counter to the existing culture.

Note that 'closeness' is different from being sexual, which can be an elegant way of being close, but is not the only way. Our sexuality, has however, been severely affected by distress so that not many people have experienced genuine human sexual expression which is a profoundly spiritual and ecstatic experience as exemplified by many of the saints. Pictures of St. Teresa of Avila in prayer show her in an ecstatic state which resembles that of a state of orgasm. True spirituality and true sexuality are identical and are an experience of the divine. God is totally, ecstatically, madly, sexually in love which each of us with a love which most of us never experience and find very difficult to accept but which is the starting point for the whole Christian life.

Today we are starting to reclaim this by exploring the Re-Evaluation Co-Counselling set of tools as a means of healing and thus promoting effective evangelization. We cannot give what we have not got. The first step is being with the other, totally present, taking turns to listen to each other without judgment and without our own material, suggestions or advice, running. We are just, but powerfully, there and seeing the humanity behind the story and inviting that forth, holding out the true picture of reality that all is well and that the universe is benign and that everything is unfolding just exactly as it should.

We hold out that we are held in the palm of God's hand, a hand of love which we are called to embody just as Christ did. The transformation he brought about in peoples' lives was primarily by his presence, his acceptance and his love of the person, e.g. the woman at the well, the man born blind, and Lazarus, along with Peter, John, Mathew, and many others. All of whom, because of their encounter with Christ, became most effective evangelizers. As followers of Christ we are called to the same vocation.

“CHAPLAINS THIRTY MINUTES WORKSHOPS”

A new feature of the National Conference was the inclusion of a Chaplain’s Thirty Minute Workshop after lunch. Twelve such workshops were held, two of which are included in this Report.

- **Christology by Fr Bruce Botha SJ**
- **How do Catholics Read the Bible? by Fr Bruce Botha SJ**

CHRISTOLOGY

By: Fr Bruce Botha SJ

Christology is at heart how we describe our encounter with Jesus. The Christian Church has, throughout the ages, had to grapple with the identity of Jesus and what he meant to the people of that day. Christology can broadly be broken into two categories, descending and ascending. Descending Christology is one that starts from his divinity and then tries to make sense of what he said and did in the light of that. A good example would be the prologue from the gospel of John. An ascending Christology begins with the experience the community of faith had of Jesus and from that experience constructed a picture of the divinity of Christ. Examples of these would be the synoptic gospels.

We then briefly looked at three periods of the Church's history and described what people were saying about Jesus.

Biblical Christology - the Christology of the first 100 years of the Church- Scriptures show that the early Church grew in their understanding of who Jesus was, and that each community (Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, Paul) faced different challenges and had different needs, so the picture of Jesus that each of the writers presents is tailored for their particular community.

Creedal Christology - the Christology of the Church up until Nicaea - the Church grew in its understanding of who Jesus was, as it grappled with uncertainty and ambiguity. Clarity over the full humanity and divinity of Jesus was something that only emerged after much reflection and debate. The early councils of the Church had to answer the following questions: was Jesus God in the same way that the Father was God? Was the Holy Spirit God in the same way that the Father and the Son were God? Was Jesus both divine and human, and if so, how?

Modern contextual Christology - the Christology of the Church after Vatican II (African; Liberation; Feminist; GLBT) - Specific groups of people can and do experience Jesus in their particular context in particular ways. Who is the Jesus that the poor and oppressed of Latin America encounter? Who is the Jesus that the women of patriarchal societies encounter? Who is the Jesus that those marginalized because of their sexual orientation encounter? These are the questions that we ask when we do contextual Christology.

HOW DO CATHOLICS READ THE BIBLE?

By: Fr Bruce Botha SJ

Inspired, not dictated: The scriptures were not whispered into some scribes ear but were the record of a people's relationship with God. The writers used the language of their time and culture to try and capture the essence of God, the world, and their relationship with both.

Literal vs theological truth: The bible is a collection of different kinds of literature. We should not try to read poetry as though it were law, or law as though it were history. The bible is not a scientific text book as the book of Genesis shows. The Church has for a number of years taught that evolution is compatible with our Christian faith precisely because we should not be reading the creation stories as though they were science. There are actually two creation stories in Genesis (Chapters 2 and 3) so if one were to take the bible as literal truth we would have to say that one of the accounts is true and the other false. The scripture scholars say that neither of the creation stories is literally true but both convey deep theological truths. Truths about God loving the world into existence and guiding its development; about why men and women seem to fit so well together; about the human freedom and our propensity to make choices that lead us away from the life that God wants for us.

The "three worlds" approach to studying scripture: When we study scripture, we cannot simply take it at face value, as the above point has illustrated. We firstly need to understand the world behind the text, in other words, the context of the writer. What were the challenges that he or his audience were facing? What were the cultural values of the time and the social practices? We also need to look at the world of the text itself, identifying the genre so that we know what kind of rules of interpretation we should follow. We should compare the text to similar passages in the bible and see if there is a literary relationship. Are there particular literary devices that the writer uses to make a point? Once we understand the context of a piece of scripture and have investigated its structure, we then turn to the third world, the world in front of the text. In other words, what we as readers bring to the text. We should be aware that our own histories can shape the interpretation that we make of a text. We can exclude certain legitimate interpretations because they challenge our own cultural values and prejudices. Examples of prejudices that could shape how we interpret scripture are patriarchy and homophobia.

STATUARY SESSION

- **ACTS NEC Report 2008 / 2009**
- **Minutes of the Election**
- **Evaluation / Comment / Reflection of Reports**
- **Provincial Reports**
- **Branch Reports**

**STATUARY SESSION
ACTS NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT
MAFIKENG JULY 2009**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the report of the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS) on the proceedings of the National Executive Committee (NEC), which was elected by the ACTS Community during the 15th Annual National Conference that was held at Maria Trost, Mpumalanga, June 2008.

This report serves to highlight the role or function of the NEC and also, at the same time, report back on the activities in which the NEC was involved. It is therefore of significant importance to members to note that this report is serving as the main report for the term of office 2008/09. This report serves to make members aware that the NEC will be reporting on its achievements, failures and recommendations to the ACTS community for the coming period.

There is however, a need that members understand the content of this document in the context in which it is presented. It is therefore prudent to provide the background as well as the origin of the organization before we can proceed further with the report.

1.1 Background and Origin of ACTS

In late 1993 the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS) was founded, when the Catholic Students Association (CASA) and National Catholic Federation of Students (NCFS), and other Catholic student societies were dissolved. Originally, NCFS appeared to be the only Catholic structure in the country, however this changed when the so-called black campuses (Universities that only black students attended) decided to form CASA thereby leaving NCFS to exist in the historically white campuses.

Following the transition within the country in the early 1990's many efforts were made to try to merge the two student bodies into one Catholic movement. However, after various attempts it was then agreed to form only one unified movement. The Association of Catholic Tertiary Students was a new organisation which encapsulated the students from Universities, the former Technikons, and Teacher Training Colleges.

The Association of Catholic Tertiary Students is identified as the student-driven faith community within the Church discerning the "signs of the times" within the context of a South African community in the light of the Gospel.

2. The Committee

The 2008/09 ACTS National Executive Committee was elected at the Fifteenth ACTS Annual National Conference where delegates from different campuses all over the country were represented. The committee comprises twelve members, four of whom were elected during the conference and six being elected from the provincial level. The other two are the ACTS National Chaplain and ACTS National Patron. These are:-

ACTS National Patron:	Bishop Z P Mvemve
ACTS National Chaplain:	Fr Michael Hagan ISch
ACTS National President:	Lebogang Masha
ACTS National General Secretary:	Molahlehi Sonopo
ACTS National Treasurer:	Sello Matsena
ACTS National Media and Publicity:	Resty Mushi
ACTS KZN NEC member:	Sabelo Mthembu (Resigned)
ACTS Gauteng NEC member:	Ebetsamang Thupae
ACTS Limpopo NEC member:	Shiba Joseph Matlhape
ACTS Western Cape NEC member:	Caritus Maselesele
ACTS Free State NEC member:	Retselisitsoe Tshola
ACTS Eastern Cape NEC member:	Archford Sakonda

2.1 National Chaplaincy

The position of the ACTS National Chaplain is presently held by Fr Michael Hagan ISch. He resides in Cape Town where the ACTS National Office is based. His main concern is to develop ACTS to reach out to the frontiers and to be an organization that is unified and rooted in Christ. As we all know the process of appointing a new National Chaplain is an on-going issue, the position is now open and nominations can be submitted to the Bishops.

2.2 ACTS National Presidency

The position of ACTS National President is held by Miss Lebogang Masha. During her tenure in office she managed to interactively unite ACTS from all parts of the country where problems were encountered. Through her experience, gained whilst she was on the previous year's committee, she brought many ideas to the NEC and ensured that interdependence existed between the members.

2.3 National Secretary General

The position of ACTS National Secretary General is held by Mr Molahlehi Sonopo. For any organization to function properly it is through the hands of the General Secretary. Therefore, this portfolio is regarded as the fundamental one for the organization. Communication is fostered through this portfolio. All the branches countrywide have received important and significant information from this portfolio. It is worth mentioning that this work was not only achieved by the ACTS General Secretary alone but with the help of ACTS National Administrator, Mr Caritus Maselesele.

2.4 National Media and Publicity Officer

The ACTS Media and Publicity Officer portfolio is held by Miss Resty Mushi. This portfolio is also a crucial one, since it markets and updates ACTS information by publicising it to the loyal members and the public. The ACTS National Conference of 2008 mandated the incoming NEC to update the ACTS website. It can be reported that the following was carried out: ACTS approached the SACBC to give assistance in this matter. The SACBC Social Communications Office has recently been renewed and it can be reported that ACTS National in recent weeks has been allotted a webpage and a blog at www.sacbc.org.za Added to this, through the assistance of Fr Russell SJ,

chaplain to Wits and UJ, ACTS National now has its own website with the address www.actsnational.org.za This website is now in the process of being approved by SARS.

Communication within the NEC was greatly improved due to the usage of Facebook. As can be seen from the documents received at this conference, the NEC has been able to improve the quality of the National Documents. The following documents were published this year:

- Report of the ACTS Annual Leadership and Training Conference
- 2 copies of ACTS INFO
- 1 edition of ACTions

2.5 The National Treasurer

This portfolio is the responsibility of Mr Sello Matsena. The audited financial statements will be presented separately from this report.

2.6 The Spiritual and Liturgy Officer

The ACTS Spiritual and Liturgy Officer is Mr Ebetsamang Thupae. For any Christ centered organization to operate to the maximum level, it must have lively spiritual events which are well organized. The fact that the leaders of ACTS identified Evangelization as an important sign of the times emphasizes the importance of this portfolio.

2.7 Gender and Human Rights Officer

This portfolio is held by Mr Archford Sakonda who has been in office for only two months. ACTS, like other organizations, prioritises its vision and mission statements. ACTS strives to discourage sexism, racism, xenophobia and poverty as stipulated from the "Mission Statement for 2013". Gender and human rights is one of the areas in which ACTS is committed to set a platform of transformation for the youth in the country at large, particularly those in the Catholic Church.

2.8 Alumni

This portfolio was held by Mr Sabelo Mthembu until his resignation during May 2009. Having dedicated alumni is such a blessing from God, and it is important to note that there have been many initiatives to ensure that they remain in contact with ACTS. The NEC is, in fact, happy to announce that many of the branches have managed to establish good relationships with the portfolio and some alumni have made contributions for members to attend this conference. We hope that other branches will share their experiences regarding alumni. As is the custom, alumni have been invited to this conference as a way of acknowledging them. The NEC would, once again, like to urge all branches to create a full database of alumni and eventually send it to the incoming ACTS National Secretary General in order to keep contact with the respective alumni.

2.9 Project Officer and High School Project Officer

The Project and High School Project Officer portfolio is held jointly by Mr Caritus Maselesele and Mr Shiba Mathlape. Mr Maselesele deals more with the projects that concern tertiary students, e.g. tinned food collection etc. while Mr Mathlape is more focused on marketing ACTS to scholars in order to familiarize them with the existence of ACTS. The High School Campaign is an ongoing campaign whereby ACTS annually informs learners about ACTS. The experience from this project shows that for various reasons most branches are not taking part in this project. Both project officers have been working jointly in ensuring that all projects that the NEC is involved in are running smoothly without any complications. They would like to encourage all the delegates gathered here to enhance this program by visiting their local schools and also to educate the scholars about ACTS.

3. MANDATES FROM THE ACTS NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2008

3.1 Launch of CPUT (Cape Town) and NW (Vaal)

3.2 Both of these branches were launched during the current term of office and we wish them God's blessings. The following campuses are still to be launched in the future:

- Fort Hare (East London)
- Walter Sisulu (Butterworth)
- North West (Potchefstroom)
- TUT (Polokwane)

3.3 Website Launch

Refer to ACTS Media and Publicity Office.

3.4 ACTS being part of the developing Diocesan Youth structure

ACTS is fully committed to the Diocesan Youth Structures, by involving them in the activities of ACTS such as the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rallies.

ACTS participated in the process to develop the Catholic Youth Leadership Resource Manual in partnership with the SACBC Youth Office and the Siyabhabha Trust. This Leadership Manual will be used by the Diocesan Youth structures within the SACBC Region and by ACTS.

3.4 Community outreach project

It is with great pleasure that the NEC reports that it is really pleased that many branches are involved in an outreach program, including adopting a home.

4. PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES

4.1 Mission Statement for the year 2008/09

During the first NEC meeting the NEC formulated the Mission and Vision Statement for the year 2008/09. This reads as follows:

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

- Developing dynamic visionary leaders who are aware of their cultural identity, who encourage fair leadership, tolerance, non-racial and anti-xenophobic practices.
- Evangelisation through African culture in order to experience God.
- Encouraging and facilitating an environment which builds and develops the youth to actively participate in all spheres of society.”

It is therefore, very significant to note that the Mission and Vision Statement was formulated as a response to the challenges that the youth of South Africa, especially the Catholic students, are facing at the present moment. To mention only a few of these:

- 1) Young people including students turning away from their Catholic faith, with the consequence that students do not take ownership of ACTS at their respective branches.
- 2) Ignorance of Christ, not being spiritually fulfilled

4.2 ACTS Annual National Leadership and Training Conference 2008

During the first week of December 2008 the 15th Annual ACTS Leadership and Training Conference was held at Koinonia Conference Centre in Johannesburg. The theme of the conference was “*To encourage and facilitate an environment which builds and develops the youth to actively participate in all spheres of society*”. The conference was attended by delegates from various branches of different provinces, but not all branches were represented. It was an interactive conference with talks, debates, games, various team and social events.

The level of participation amongst the members who attended this conference was tremendous which shows that there are potential leaders within ACTS to lead the organisation into the future. A number of objectives which were set for this conference were successfully met, and this was catalyzed by good leadership and the commitment and skills displayed by the delegates. The ABCD Lifestyle Campaign was promoted, including scenes dramatised with the theme “*The future of South Africa without prevention*”. The team work brought good relationships between members of different groups, who had to work hard together and be creative. Leadership Skills were fostered through a number of topics which were presented by the NEC members. The following topics were discussed:

- Role Clarity
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Team Work
- Leadership Training

The Community Outreach was achieved by the delegates visiting the Mother Teresa Hospice, where they experienced the reality of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and how it affects us. The Vigil Prayer instilled a sense of hope and forgiveness associated with any burdens faced by individuals. It will be good to mention that this prayer was conducted by the students themselves. The conference ended on a high note with a heated debate during the Policy Development session when discerning the signs of the times regarding the following:

- Black Economic Empowerment (B.E.E)
- Foreign nationals
- Nature of the State

These were identified as the issues that challenge the South African economic policy. It was recommended that the abovementioned issues be discussed further in this conference.

4.3 ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rallies

The month of May in the ACTS calendar is set aside for the Annual Youth Rallies, which are held across the country with the aim of promoting the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign and educating the youth about HIV/AIDS prevention and behaviour change. During the 2008/09 NEC term of office ABCD Lifestyle Campaigns were conducted in Bloemfontein, Fort Hare, Vaal, Cape Town, Mafikeng and Turfloop. The NEC would like to remind the provinces that rallies can only be hosted by launched branches and that maximum participation from all branches is imperative to the success and spreading of the message of the campaign.

4.3 Tinned Food and Clothes Collection

We are living in challenging times. South Africa is one of the developing countries where we have people falling into different classes. This phenomenon has brought many setbacks, such as robbery, unemployment, poor health, poverty etc., into the country. As a consequence many communities including students have been impoverished. ACTS, as a community of friends, identified all of these consequences as “signs of the times” within our country.

The Annual ACTS Tinned Food and Clothes Collection proceeded very well this year at many branches. The NEC would like to recommend that branches must keep this as an ongoing project.

4.4 National Visits

The NEC also embarked on the visitation of branches throughout the country. A number of NEC members were deployed to different provinces. The aim of the visitation is not to evaluate but rather to listen and share experiences with the ACTS Branch Committee members at the grass roots level. All Provinces were visited. The NEC would like to thank branches for taking good care of them during their visitations. May God bless you.

5. RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.1 Partners within the Church

ACTS has strong links with the SACBC as the National Chaplain has always been an intermediate between the two. The links have even grown stronger this year as the SACBC managed to assist ACTS to develop a website. Many of our branches country wide participate in events that are hosted by Diocesan Youth Structures. The participation of ACTS in such events serves as a platform to advertise and maintain its dignity to the youth. Reports indicate that our members contribute positively to these meetings. They offer skills, expertise and wisdom in order to build youth that is rooted in Christ.

The NEC has continued to maintain good relationships with our existing partners namely: Missio, the SACBC Aids Office, Siyabhabha Trust and the SACBC Youth Office. It is hoped that these partnerships will be nurtured in the coming years. The partnership with Family Health International continues especially through the "Graduate Alive" programme.

5.2 IMCS Africa

The relationship between ACTS and the IMCS Pan African Office has broken down due to lack of communication.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

The NEC this year managed to participate in the following gatherings:

6.1 SACBC Pastoral Forum

The ACTS National Chaplain, ACTS National President and ACTS National Treasurer represented ACTS at the SACBC Pastoral Forum held in Durban during August 2008, with the theme of Evangelisation.

6.2 University Chaplains' Conference

The ACTS National President attended the University Chaplains' Conference which was held in Koinonia, Johannesburg in May 2009. At the conference four ACTS alumni were invited to share their views.

7. REFLECTIONS

It was through the will of God that the current NEC worked together with love, peace and happiness until the end of their year of office. The year 2008/09 presented many challenges to the NEC. We hope that we have served ACTS to our utmost. The outgoing NEC would like to reflect on the following:

- Evangelization remains an important issue for ACTS;
- The current economic crisis experienced throughout the world. This, however, in the long run will have a bad impact on the needy.
- Initiating plans that will help sustain the youth in the country especially leading the youth to have good morals.

8. Recommendations

- In the future we would like to advise all branches which are experiencing difficulties concerning faxes, to inform the incoming NEC where they can be reached.
- The NEC urges all branches to follow the correct procedures of election at Branch and Provincial level.
- During elections, elect according to the personal capabilities, skills and passion for ACTS.
- Tinned food and clothes collection: all branches are urged to cooperate in this, because we are surrounded by needy people.
- The NEC would like to suggest that the incoming NEC must prepare a National Visit program earlier in order to avoid any inconveniences.

We strongly recommend that branches should seriously engage with learners or scholars about the awareness of ACTS, not only for rallies but also as an ongoing campaign.

9. Conclusion

The year has really passed well, although encompassed with a couple of tasks the NEC managed to conquer. The NEC is grateful to all those people who managed to work with the Association and those who were positive about our Association. However, after what we have achieved the NEC also has much to atone for. It is therefore, by the grace and love of the Lord that the NEC served its tenure in an impartial and competent way in order to achieve its main objectives and mandates.

Acknowledgements

The NEC owes much to all the stake holders, and also to our chaplain who steered us through difficult times with his great passion for every branch either big or small. We would then like to wish you good luck with your studies, and every blessing for putting that much effort in your respective branches also on the provincial level and, more importantly, being here at the National Conference.

Compiled by:
Mr Sonopo Molahlehi
ACTS National General Secretary
2008/2009

STATUARY SESSION - MINUTES OF THE ELECTION

The Second Session, on the election of the National Executive Committee, was introduced by Fr Michael. He explained the procedures of the elections to the delegates. Representatives of different branches were asked to stand up to confirm their presence during the election period. This was followed by the candidates being asked whether they were ready to stand for election. Each candidate was asked to give a short, five-minute motivation speech and then they were asked to leave the hall so that the elections could commence. The candidates running for election were eight in number at the beginning and later on this increased up to nine. Four candidates were campaigning for the National Presidency, one for National Treasurer, one for National General Secretary and three for Media and Publicity Officer. All the candidates delivered their manifestos successfully.

During the election the candidates who were contesting for the National Presidency portfolio had to go through the election process twice. This was prompted because an overlapping of the votes occurred during the voting session. Before the second round of votes Fr Michael asked the delegates to refer to section 4.2 of book one. This was to make the members aware that each individual who wanted to compete for this portfolio was free to contest. There were two candidates from KwaZulu-Natal, one from Limpopo and one from Free State. The names of the candidates contesting in this session were as follows:

1. Ms Mushi Resty
2. Mr Litsietsi Ramatelile
3. Mr Moses Mkhabela
4. Ms Retselisitsoe Tshola.

Both Ms Mushi Resty and Ms Retselisitsoe Tshola were eliminated in the first round. Mr Moses Mkhabela and Mr Litsietsi Ramatelile went on to the second voting round. Finally, Mr Moses Mkhabela was elected to become the ACTS National President for the new academic year.

The following people were elected to form the ACTS National Executive Committee for the academic year 2008/10:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. ACTS National President: | Moses Mkhabela |
| 2. ACTS National Secretary General: | Shaka Dzebu |
| 3. ACTS National Treasurer: | Jason Bremner |
| 4. ACTS Media and Publicity Officer: | Tebogo Pule |

The newly elected committee had an induction Mass, which was held at St Mary's Chapel. Fr Kabelo celebrated the Mass with us. Fr Michael gave a sermon during the Mass in which he explained that things are different these days from what was before. The students in the past were not that quiet, but the kind of students we have today are not so outspoken but are students that are faith driven.

STATUTORY SESSION

METHODS TO BE USED FOR THE REFLECTION OF REPORTS

EVALUATION / ASSESMENT / REFLECTION OF REPORTS

UNW (Mafikeng)

1. What are the strengths?

Well structured and presented
It was unclear and straight to the point
All provinces are preserved

2. What are the weakness-growth areas?

Didn't clarify the portfolio of Free State member doesn't appear under the portfolios description.
No further info about the progress of the website.
Lack of specificity on Gender and Human Rights Officer
Resignation of member, what happens, is the member replaced?

3. Recommendations?

They should give the report day before for proper analyses
Improvement of communication and poor influence on the province.
Grass roots didn't know NEC
Evangelisation. More should have been done
Started our own alumni data base, but have not seen NEC pushing it

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)

Need to be more visible
Pull up our socks
We need to do more
We are progressing - new branches developing and others yet to develop.

KZN

1. What are the strengths?

The report was well presented
Enormous exposure from external youth structures that ACTS has received.

2. What are the weakness-growth areas?

The report should have been formatted better - Table of content
Breakdown of communication especially with IMCS
The report was incomplete e.g. Free State NEC role not being mentioned we had to pick up for ourselves.
The portfolio of the provincial NEC's were not on the committee list
Some of the reports did not have some of the pages.
Some of the documents mentioned in the report we did not receive e.g. edition of ACTIONs
Nothing was said about the representation of ACTS in the World Youth Day in Australia
The reason of the breakdown relationship within IMCS was not mentioned.

3. Recommendations?

Must rebuild the broken relationship with IMCS Pan Africa
The report should be given earlier so that one can have enough time to read it.
Clearly state where the publications were done please.
Clearly state the measures you take about the rebuild of IMCS

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)

We should continue to reach out to other youth structures and in growing each other spiritually and making a difference in each others lives: Education and Life

STATUARY SESSION - PROVINCIAL REPORTS

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

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL REPORT

By: Mr Moses Mokhabela

1. Composition of PEC Limpopo

- NEC Mr. Joseph Matlhape (Majozi) (UL)
- Secretary Mr. Moses Mokhabela (Univen)
- ABCD Lifestyle Officers Ms. Joey Molepo (UL)

Ms. Gabaza Mkhabela (Univen)

1. Achievements

The term of our office as a Province started with enthusiasm whereby members were elected onto the PEC committee in early August 2008. Our first task was to send the NEC for Limpopo to the first NEC Meeting held in Cape Town. We then had our pre-exam mass in a different style whereby each Campus held their own Mass in preparation for the exams. We had our first meeting as the PEC in planning for the coming year 2009 in Koinonia whereby the Province managed to send delegates from both campuses to the ACTS National Annual Leadership and Training Conference in December.

We opened our academic year 2009 with a mind of recruiting new members to ACTS on both Campuses through the Orientation programme. Both campuses held their Opening Mass by welcoming functions for the first years to ACTS and to the Church. Our second ACTS Limpopo Province ABCD Lifestyle Campaign rally was held at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus) on the 16 May 2009. The students from ACTS University of Venda travelled to Turfloop to witness which was the highly anticipated rally that was aimed at making a significant impression on the lives of different people.

The rally started at 8 am. The ACTS University of Limpopo Chaplain, Father Anthony Graff, gave us the gift of the Eucharist and then off we rolled on the way marching from the St Gregory Catholic mission all the way to the University of Limpopo. On the march students and other youth parishioners displayed different plaques and the ACTSUL banner was in the forefront leading the way under the supervision of the traffic officers.

A guest speaker from the University of Limpopo Health Centre was invited and she talked to the students about their role towards ensuring an HIV free generation and their ability to combat the pandemic. Student peer counsellors from the University of Limpopo also joined the rally and talked about the problems faced by fellow students and measures that can be taken to overcome them. Both ABCD Lifestyle officers from the respective Universities conscientised the students about the campaign and emphasized the campaign's letters ABCD. After the presentation lunch was served. Part two started with singing and dancing from both ACTSUL and ACTSUNIVEN which was superb, also different parishes from Tzaneen Diocese displayed what one can say was breath taking. We closed the day with a provincial brain storming

and exchange of thoughts. UNIVEN students left and UL students enjoyed the mini braai that was prepared.

2. Challenges

We encounter many challenges in our province such as communication amongst the two branches. As a PEC Committee we have a problem of distance in terms of holding our meetings between the two Branches. Furthermore in the branch of University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus) we came across challenges with the local Parish Youth by not being cooperative with the activities of ACTS and Church matters generally. At the University of Venda we encounter challenges with regard to funds from the SRCs, the Bishop being less co-operative.

3. National Visits

We were privileged and honoured by the National Visits coming to our Province to spend some time with our members. Mr. Molahlegi Sonopo and Mr. Ebetsamang Thupae strengthened our relationship and communication between the two branches furthermore they enlightened us about the election procedures of ACTS.

NORTH WEST PROVINCE
NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY
MAFIKENG BRANCH

Programme of Action 2009

February

1. Official opening of the structure
2. Ash Wednesday

March

1. Funday
2. Closing party

April

1. Retreat

May

1. Campus out-reach

June

1. June 16
2. National conference

July

1. Official opening for the second semester

August

1. ABCD Lifestyle Campaign rally

September

1. Pilgrimage day

October

- I. Prayer for examinations
- II. Election of the new committee
- III. Closure of the structure for 2009

ACTS NWU Mafikeng Branch Executive Committee:

Chaplain:	Fr D Setlhabaka	
Chairperson:	Tebogo Pule	076 889 2058
Secretary:	Leah Mooketsi	073 061 5277
Treasurer:	Mmabogosi Phele	072 272 5729
P.R.O.:	Obakeng Pule	076 488 3853
Liturgy Office:	Nduna Kaale	079 162 9514

ACTS Annual Report

Opening of the Structure

On February we had an official opening of the structure whereby we had Mass with the Chaplain together with returning and new students. The formal introduction of the executive committee was done.

Ash Wednesday

On February we, as the branch, celebrated Ash Wednesday at the St Henry's parish together with all other Catholics within the district; we went there in a very large number.

Fun day

All work and no play makes jack a dull boy, on this note what I am saying is that we had a fun day even if the weather was not satisfactory, the main objective was achieved where the purpose was nothing else except enjoying ourselves. The only difficulty we encountered was the co-operation with other members who did not want to take part in some of the activities.

Retreat

The executive and members agreed to postpone the retreat to July so as to pray for the new semester

Closing Party of the First Term

This was just a simple party for members just to thank them for their co-operation for the previous quarter.

Presidential visit

The ACTS National President visited our campus and met the branch executive committee and the ACTS members.

Camp

As young people within the St Henry' district we, together with the youth committee, managed to organize a camp which was adventurous and enjoyable as we got to socialize and know each other at a personal level. We had a five day camp.

Prayer day

Prayer is the most important form of communication between us and God as we pray and sing to him and actually say what we need from the Lord. Speaking out what the Lord knows that we want spiritually. This was done for spiritual upliftment.

Launch of the ACTS NWU Vaal Branch

We as the branch went together to witness the launch of ACTS at our sister campus which is the Vaal campus of the North West University. The arrangements and preparations were very good. Yes the ACTS in the VAAL Campus of the North West University does exist it is present as I am speaking. It was a good adventure and a learning experience.

Academic Mass

The primary purpose of the Academic Mass was not only for students but it was a large invitation to all people both youth and adults as long as the

individual was studying. As exams approached we prepared ourselves and asked for spiritual guidance for those trying times of the exams. We had a motivational talk by the Youth District Chairperson and the ACTS MFK Branch Secretary, Miss L Mooketsi. She wished all the youth members luck with the exams and we had Mass once more with Fr Mahemo where we got spiritual upliftment. Fr Mahemo gave us a special blessing and also wished us good luck for the exams that were ahead of us.

June 16

We, NWU MFK branch, celebrated youth day together with all the youth in the Molopo region taking off where we left last year when the main objective was to gain co-operation and a working relationship together with the all the Molopo region youth. The event was a pure success where we had Mass together with Fr Mahemo and Fr Sekao then after Mass we had breakfast and we had motivation from the former National Executive Member, Mr Thabo Kgole after which we had a concert. From the concert we had lunch then a sports session where we played various sporting codes including among them soccer, netball, le di-tini. The day was very much enjoyed by all youth as it was our day as young people.

Strengths

1. Good working relationship between the structure and the SRC
2. Managed to maintain old members within the structure for the better growth of the branch.
3. Committed chaplain.
4. Managed to work very closely with the youth councils nearer to the campus.
5. Actively involved within the events of the St Henry's Pastoral District under our chaplain.
6. The spirit of prayer within the members.

Challenges

1. The biggest challenge we have is the poor communication via letters or telephonically between the branch and the national office.
2. Too much commitment on campus of members
3. Time keeping.
4. Allocation of funds from the campus management
5. Launching ACTS at the Potchefstroom Campus and becoming a province.

Conclusion

In conclusion the committee would like to thank each and every participant including the ACTS NEC, the ACTS BEC of Mafikeng and, most of all, the members of ACTS Mafikeng branch for giving us the honour to lead the branch for this year. Even though the road hasn't been easy in information distribution and completion of various tasks, the executive wishes to see the movement growing in a form of launching other branches to make up a solid province. In those few words I thank you ladies and gentlemen.

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

By: Sakonda Archford

ACTS Provincial Executive Committee

Chairperson/ Provincial Coordinator:	Mr Archford Sakonda
Secretary:	Mr Mpumelelo Nkomo
Financial Secretary:	Mr Richard Stonier
Liturgy Officer:	Mrs Anna
Gender:	Miss Tsaone
ABCD Lifestyle Officer:	Mr Nobert Jere
Alumni:	Miss Kaone

Introduction

The ACTS in the Eastern Cape Province is made up of Rhodes University, Walter Sisulu University, University of Fort Hare and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The Chaplain for our province is Fr Trevor Button appointed in 2008 by Bishop Michael Coleman. The Eastern Cape ACTS organization is determined to help students both Catholics and non Catholics to live life according to the gospel. However, the association works with those willing to work with them. Catholicism in the Province is viewed as the only solution to a happy life, foregoing all the other things aside. ACTS in the Province is committed to change the lives of youth around their campuses and engaging them when ACTS hosts its events. The Province stands ready to play its roles and execute tasks in a competent and a non-partial manner. The execution of tasks in the Eastern Cape is very trying because of the distance between the campuses, nevertheless the Province is functioning very well. In that vein the Province has two main events every year and these are the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rally and the Provincial Mass. The Province also engages in various activities which include retreats, spiritual trips, sports and discussions.

Provincial Mass

The Provincial Mass in Eastern Cape is the time when all the members of the Province will be united in Christ as it will be the only time which the Province has set aside for all its members to celebrate holy Mass together as a single family united in Christ. The Mass is usually celebrated in September with the new committees. The Provincial Mass for the year 2008/2009 was celebrated at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and the celebrant was Fr Trevor Button, the acting Chaplain for the Province. This Mass is usually to be celebrated by the Bishop but, unfortunately, he was unable to be present. All the campuses managed to attend the Provincial Mass.

ABCD Lifestyle Campaign

The ABCD Lifestyle Campaign is considered a very important event in our Province. The Eastern Cape is alarmed about the dangers and the problems which the HIV/AIDS pandemic is causing in our communities. The Eastern

Cape Province acknowledges that there are some problems which are caused by the citizens when looking at the infected especially stigmatisation. In most districts, provinces and countries, the people who live with the HIV virus are regarded as less than human beings, they are treated differently, they face rejection from friends and are often marginalized. After considering that, the Province wanted to go an extra mile to teach the people about the disease, as well as the effects of stigmatisation and decided to have as the theme of our ABCD Lifestyle Campaign, "STIGMA THE SILENT KILLER". The University of Fort Hare hosted this year's ABCD Lifestyle Campaign. Our Chaplain, Father Trevor Button graced the occasion. He was representing Bishop Michael Coleman, who was committed with other duties. Father Trevor Button led the Mass, which started at 10:30am. It was a very successful occasion and all the branches managed to attend the rally. The turn-out was good and 290 people managed to attend the ABCD Life Style Campaign, nevertheless other institutions such as Walter Sisulu University faced problems with their SRC to get the transport, which reduced the number of the people who attended since they had to go by the taxi.

The ABCD Lifestyle Officer for the Province presented first, he challenged all the ACTS members to think of the best ways to help people living with HIV/AIDS since our task is not only to prevent the disease, as within us we already have infected people. Each Province brought its own presentation and recommendations. The presentations were in different forms, with the first one in the form of a drama, the second poetry, then a dialogue play, and discussions. It was very amazing to note that most Catholics go against the Church's teaching against the use of condoms. In that vein the whole Province strongly condemned the use of condoms because the condoms were only seen as a major cause of the spread of the disease since it promotes prostitution and fornication which is against the word of the Lord. This reflected that people are choosing amongst the commandments and only abide by the simple ones and for the most difficult ones like sex after marriage they tend turn that away.

The Province managed to do all its Provincial events, mainly the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign, this time the life has been made easy by the NEC's intervention through its subsidies for the event. The Eastern Cape was bequeathed with much needed grants from the NEC, through the chaplain Fr Michael Hagan, therefore the Province wishes to thank the NEC for that.

Spiritual trips

The Province has also as its mandate to build its members spiritually and the Province tried hard to achieve that objective. The Province therefore visited Roma in Lesotho for the spiritual trips, although only few people managed to go for the visit mainly because of financial problems. The few people who went there had a prosperous trip and experienced the love of the Lord.

Recommendations

- The Province held as its main objective to live according to the gospel, therefore the province is willing to have retreats as a Province.
- Improve the attendance despite the great distance amongst campuses.

- Help the communities develop and help the needy and the HIV/AIDS victims.
- Improve the attendance of its members mainly in the national events although having difficulties in finance.

Conclusion

The committee worked tirelessly to bring the Province together despite the great kilometers between our campuses. The year progressed very well since the Lord kept us all alive and we still wish that the Lord through his goodness will always be on our guard and help our province to prosper despite the natural disadvantages it is subjected to.

I would to thank the Chaplain for the work he did throughout the year, we will always remember him for his quest to bring all the ACTS members together in a very competent and loving way. I would also want to thank the NEC members who managed to visit the friendly Province of the Eastern Cape, mainly Sonopo and Lebogang for the time they sacrificed to travel to Eastern Cape to witness the Province electing its Provincial Executive Committee.

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. These 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 19th April, whereby they were discussing the national policies. ABCD Rally was supposed to take place on 1 May but was postponed because of Ascension Thursday; currently it is planned to take place 6 September.

The tinned food collection Mass was a success and was celebrated on 4 May and we also got support from the Methodist Society and South African Student Congress (Tisha-Vanga Branch), this event was hosted by the University of 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 and UCT spends their time with St Michael's. There is great communication as well as relationship between the University of Western Cape (UWC), 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, will be celebrated at Stellenbosch University and UWC on Sunday 27th July.

ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rally

Cultural Day and Sports Day hosted by UCT in September.

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

We failed to build a relationship with S U, since they resist attending any events taking place around Western Province with 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 branch.

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

GAUTENG PROVINCE

Annual Report

The Provincial Executive Committee of ACTS Gauteng Province 2008/9 stepped into office in September 2008.

The official welcoming of this committee was at the Annual Provincial Revival, held at the Vaal University of Technology campus.

The Committee consisted of the following delegates:

Ebetsamang Thupae from the Tshwane University of Technology Rand Campus as Chairperson.

Dineo Moletsane from the University of Johannesburg as the General Secretary.

Kabelo from Tshwane The University of Technology Ga-Rankua Campus as the Media and Publicity officer.

Thato from The University of Johannesburg as the Treasurer.

The other portfolios were not filled due to lack of attendance from other branches. The Chairpersons and branch representatives from the rest of the branches were unavailable.

So a meeting was scheduled amongst the four delegates, which was set for October, before the Provincial Coordinator, Ebetsamang Thupae, would go for the first NEC meeting in Cape Town. The absent branches were requested to send the required delegates, namely their Chairperson and branch representative. Due to the lack of responses to the meeting invitation, it was postponed because the few branches that responded could not reach a quorum. This would make the meeting non-official. The next scheduled meeting in the same month was also unsuccessful because examinations had started in the branches and they could not attend. The meeting was then scheduled for February 2009, when all institutions had fully opened and branches had reopened. The new PEC only managed to meet for the first time in late February 2009, and planned the year. The following is a list of all the events scheduled for the year 2009. The first two are events that carried on after the ACTS Annual Conference in Lydenburg to this day.

The annual Sports/Fun day was held in the month of August 2008.

The event was hosted by the University of Johannesburg. Given the recent communication breakdown in the previous years with the branch, this was viewed as a wonderful way of re-involving the branch in Provincial events. It proved to be a major success. Five branches attended the event, with a few youth members from the local community surrounding the institution.

The Annual Provincial revival was held in the month of September 2008. The event was hosted by The Vaal University of Technology branch. Five branches also were present at the event. Father Victor Phalana, of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Pretoria, was invited to lead us in prayer and worship through the night. This reconnected many students with God. The spirit of the Province was rejuvenated and strengthened, as many sang praises to God, confessed their sins and received healing.

The following morning saw the induction Mass of the new Provincial Executive Committee.

The new PEC had certain milestones to achieve, as it then consisted of only four members. Due to the difficulties of the new PEC failing to meet in 2008 after their induction, a provincial year plan was not yet drafted.

First PEC Meeting

The first successful PEC meeting was held in late February 2009, and hosted by the Tshwane University of Technology Rand Campus. The meeting was a success and a year plan was drafted and approved. A major issue in the meeting was communication and the procedures of delegating PEC members. The Provincial Coordinator clarified the uncertainties and misconceptions about the procedure. All the Branch Chairpersons and Branch representatives of a Province form the Provincial Executive Committee. And from that very Committee only they shall decide amongst themselves who will take which portfolio. The vacant Portfolios were shared amongst the present delegates.

Launch of a New Branch

The year of 2009 gave rise to new challenges for the PEC, but the results of one major challenge saw the growth of the Gauteng Province. The North West University campus, situated in Vaal, had been having a number of Catholic students gathering for Mass. Having followed the manual of procedures stated in the ACTS National documents, and through consultation with the Gauteng NEC member, they requested their full recognition as an official ACTS Branch. In May 2009, the Gauteng Province launched The North West University Vaal campus ACTS Branch. The event, despite the postponement of dates, proved to be very successful. Due to the postponement, not as many branches could attend the event but the few that did manage to attend welcomed this new small Christian community into the even larger Christian community of ACTS.

The event began with our ABCD Lifestyle Campaign March from the neighbouring VUT campus, to the NWU Vaal campus. This symbolized a *"passing of the torch"* moment, where Gauteng would not only welcome them to its family, but also teach them the ACTS way of life and morality as young Catholics. Following the march was the holy Mass, where we traditionally invite the Holy Spirit and God's presence. The launch program followed, where various delegates from the Institution such as the Student Representative Council and the Management spoke. The launch was concluded by the National President, as she led us with The ACTS National Prayer. The ABCD Lifestyle presentations followed, then the overnight revival program.

The National Visits for the Gauteng Province were scheduled for the weekend of the Provincial ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rally in Vaal. Due to the absence of other branches at the event, the NEC delegates and Provincial coordinator travelled across the Province to reach other branches. They managed to visit every branch, except for Tshwane University of Technology Soshanguve campus. The Gauteng PEC was informed that the branch still has regular Mass, but it was difficult to communicate with their current executive committee, as they didn't know any of them. The PEC will be visiting the

branch, where they will join them for their Mass and shortly meet with the executive. The Provincial Coordinator will then report to the NEC on the outcome of the meeting.

The annual Sports/Fun day was held on the 8 (Saturday) August 2009. The hosting branch was The University of Limpopo Medunsa branch. The day was a success and was held at the Institution's sports field. Three branches namely ACTS TUT Rand Campus, ACTS North West University Vaal Campus and Medunsa, managed to attend; other branches had issues with transport, funding and other commitments. One ACTS alumni from the VUT also managed to come and support the event, which is exemplary and what we expect of former brothers and sisters of ACTS who remember where they come from. We started the day by welcoming the Lord's presence with a holy Mass, and then went right in to the day's activities shortly after. The Medunsa branch hosted one of the best sports/fun day events by far and catered for their guests wonderfully with a wonderful grill and hang out session at the end of the day. The fun and games that took place the entire day satisfied the purpose of the event, which was to increase our fellowship amongst branches.

The annual Provincial Revival is scheduled to be in September again, and will be held at the Vaal University of Technology campus. The PEC agreed that from then on, it will be jointly hosted by the NWU Vaal campus branch and VUT branch. The current PEC will be dissolved at the event, and the new Gauteng Province Branch Chairpersons and Branch representatives will be inducted as the new Gauteng Provincial Executive Committee of 2009/10.

In closing, the Gauteng Province grew in the past year with the birth of the new ACTS Branch. The Province is yet to improve on issues like communication and full attendance of all branches at events. But, given the fact that the nine branches are spread out and distanced from one another, this proves to still be a major milestone. With the Sports/Fun day and Revival still on the way, the PEC hopes to see all nine branches of the Gauteng Province attending the event for once in many years. One issue that should be handled well and maintained is the transition, passing on of the torch or handing of powers from one committee to the next.

KWAZULU NATAL REPORT

By: Siyabonga Siyamukela Nzuza

INTRODUCTION

I thank the Almighty God, God of all creation for the strength, grace, health and ability given to all of us since we have been in this term of office as an ambassador of Jesus Christ and to witness this July occasion 2009.

The ACTS PEC-KZN 2008/2009 is made up with 17 members, 9 campuses which have two representatives from each branch (PEC rep & Chair).

Members: Secretary: Siyamukela Nzuza	UKZN Howard College
Treasurer: Kgotso Letsoalo	DUT PMB
Media & Publicity: Patience Lunga	UKZN PMB
ABCD Lifestyle: Keaoleboga Maruping	UniZulu
Liturgy: Buhle Mavuso	UKZN Westville
Alumnae: Mojabeng Machili	MUT
Additional: Bonolo Mashishi	UKZN Med School
Sabelo Mthembu	DUT Dbn
Moses Madondo	UKZN Edgewood
Chairpersons: Fundi Cwele	UniZulu
Themba Chonco	MUT
Thabo Sethathi	DUT Dbn
Mxolisi Ndawo	DUT Pmb
Jean Twayigira	UKZN Med School
Sbusiso Zulu	UKZN Howard
Arthur Mierzwa	UKZN Pmb
Mdumiseni Nciki	UKZN Westville

The PEC had its first meeting on 21 September 2008 with an objective for the out-going PEC to hand over working documents and materials to the new PEC.

Our initial Goals, Mission and Objectives:-

1. The PEC to engage in branch visits
2. A provincial ACTS calendar / T-shirts
3. A provincial leadership award ceremony
4. Provincial membership cards
5. All PEC members to represent KZN ACTS at all NEC conferences
6. Provincial Mass / retreats / leadership workshops / outreach
7. Fundraising

On the weekend of the 3 -5 October, the PEC had a team building at Sabon House to draw up a POA for the working year. This was to carefully consider the goals and objectives for the province and to build the spirit of unity.

Plan of Action

It was agreed that we were going to have a Proudly Catholic Rally on the 28 March 2009 / 4 April, the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign on 30 May/ 6 June 2009, the Vigil on 1 August/ 9 August 2009 and the Annual General Meeting on 12/18 September 2009. Each event was planned to start with Holy Mass, thus PEC will have four Provincial Masses.

Achievements

1. We managed to have our first ever Provincial Proudly Catholic Rally at MUT which was attended by +140 people.
2. Furthermore, we managed to get a small amount of money (donation) as PEC members.
3. We have established good communication with ACCTISA
4. Developed our election procedure to be like other Provinces.
5. Promoted good relationships in our branches
6. Organised Provincial uniform / t-shirts
7. Final recognition of DUT PMB campus as an ACTS branch

Challenges

1. Absence of our Provincial NEC member at the Leadership Conference
2. Resignation of our PEC coordinator as NEC member
3. Postponement of events
4. SRC not giving funds to some other branches

Recommendation to NEC

1. NEC Constitution – needs to be amended
2. NEC Branch visit – lack of communication
3. NEC to host National Conference at KZN as we do have a lot of attractive places such as Durban Harbour, Richard's Bay Ocean, Inkamana Bay etc not only that, but also spiritual places to visit eg Ngome, Fatima, Keavelar, Ntshonswen where different Nations come to worship.

Meetings

1. 21 September 2008 at DUT Durbn
2. 3-5 October 2008 at Sabon House
3. 28 February 2009 at University of Zululand
4. 23 May 2009 at Emmanuel Cathedral Boardroom

Way Forward

1. After the resignation of our NEC member, Siyamukela Nzuzwa was elected to act as Provincial Chair for the remaining term.
2. The ABCD Lifestyle Campaign was postponed because the time set was during the exam period and so the event will be incorporated with the night vigil next semester.
3. Our term of office will end on the 12/18 September at UniZulu where we will be having the AGM and the new PEC election and handovers on the same day.

Finally I wish you, the new executives, a happy moment in the office and I pray that Almighty God will give you wisdom, strength and patience to lead this Association to a greater height.

FREE STATE PROVINCIAL REPORT

Office bearers

Portfolio	Title	Name
Chaplain	Fr	Patrick Towe
Chaplain	Fr	Mike Thoabala
Chairperson	Ms	Retselisitsoe Tshola
General Secretary	Ms	Nokuthula Mlotshwa
Media and Publicity	Mr	Lefu Mofokeng
Treasurer	Ms	Gomotsang Teane
Liturgy	Ms	Lerato Innocentia

Due to unforeseen circumstances Ms Malekhetho Mohale who was the ABCD Lifestyle Officer could no longer continue with her duties.

Sports Day

A sports day was held at the CUT sports grounds on 6 September 2008. It was a relaxing day full of fun and games.

Cultural Mass

A vibrant Mass, conducted by Fr. Lucky the chaplain from UFS Qwa Qwa campus, on 7 September, was hosted by UOFS where different varieties of cultures from South Africa and other countries were showcased through the cultural clothing that was worn and the food that was prepared.

Branch Elections

BEC elections were held in September 2008 for both CUT and UFS-main campus and in October for the UFS Qwa Qwa campus. As the campus was still trying to get on its feet and hadn't yet had their BEC elections it was difficult for them to have their committee members joining office on a Provincial level.

First Years' Welcoming and Social Event

A first years' welcoming and social event was held on 21 March at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The aim was to get the students together and for them to get to know each other on a more personal level, and also to welcome the first years into our ACTS family.

Annual Retreat

The Annual Provincial Retreat was held at Assissi in Marciellies near Ladybrand from 6 -8 March 2009 where the theme was "Holy Spirit". It was a very spiritually satisfying experience conducted by Fr Mike Thoabala and Fr Patrick Towe. Unfortunately our brothers and sisters from UNIQWA could not make it.

High Schools and Parish Visitations

In the month of April High Schools and Parishes in Bloemfontein, Thaba Nchu, Botshabelo and surrounding areas were visited where the main aim was to inform the youth about ACTS, but also about the Annual Provincial Rally. At each one of the schools and parishes the ABCD Lifestyle Campaign was presented and explained to them about leading healthy Christian lives.

Tinned Food Collection

In May each branch took the challenge head on of collecting tinned foods and old clothes, though things started off on a slow note. Two of the branches decided to carry on till next term when they will have collected even more items, after that they will then decide which charities to give them to.

CBC Retreat

A two day retreat for CBC High School was held on 28 – 30 January, where ACTS members conducted the retreat with the assistance of the Chaplains. The students received the message with great enthusiasm and openness and, overall, the two days were a great experience as it gave the ACTS students an opportunity to learn skills on how a retreat is conducted.

Provincial ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rally

The annual Provincial ABCD Lifestyle Campaign Rally was held in Bloemfontein at the Sacred Heart Cathedral on 9 May 2009. It was a huge success where over 500 young people attended the event. The theme was “God is faithful, are you?” Presentations were made and speakers graced the stage with wise words from their experiences and knowledge. The day was concluded by celebrating holy Mass.

Fundraising

It has been a difficult year for ACTS Free State when coming to finances but, through God’s grace, we have managed to survive. Fundraising events were held such as car washes, donation forms, cake sales etc.

Qwa Qwa

Relations with UFS Qwa Qwa campus have improved considerably and the communication channels have been opened. The campus is now active in provincial activities and relations between the Free State campuses are improving.

Difficulties

This year hasn’t been a good year for the Free State ACTS family due to the loss of two members earlier this year. We sadly lost Mr Lebogang Taunyane

from UFS-main campus and Mr Hopolang Thanyane from CUT. We were also taken aback by the sudden tragic death of Fr Thabo Lenyatsa who was the Diocesan Youth Chaplain and who was very much a part of our ACTS family.

Challenges

- The distance between Bloemfontein and Qwa Qwa separating the campuses is a big one which poses a great challenge when it comes to meetings and attendance of provincial events.
- Committee members who do not serve till their end of term due to lack of commitment.
- Participation of members on a provincial level is not good.

Future Activities

- A sports day to be held at CUT sports grounds
- Cultural Mass to be hosted by UFS Qwa Qwa campus

In conclusion, it has been a year of ups and downs for Acts Free State. I would like to thank our chaplains for the guidance and support and to the different branches in the province thank you for your hard work and keeping ACTS alive in the Free State.

BRANCH REPORTS
taken from the Branch Report Walk About

University of Zululand

Year 2009 plan of Action

First year welcoming function
Diocesan sports day
Outreach-Inkandla Orphanage
Executive Committee mini retreat lead by Fr Max
Youth day and ABCD Lifestyle Campaign
ACTS promotion on Campus
Progress reports to student body and the NEC
Increasing number of members 250 plus
Pilgrimage to Ngome

Remaining Activities

Cultural Mass
Fatima
Final years farewell

Challenges

Acquiring funds from the SRC

University of Kwazulu-Natal Howard College Campus

Sunday Mass
Thursday Mass
Tuesday and Wednesday group meetings (Bible, Praise and Worship,
Socialising)
Intercampus visits
Confirmation classes
Graduation
Pilgrimage to Ngome
ACTS E-mail
Hosted NEC Provincial visit
Orientation

Challenges

Dwindling membership
Unsupportive SRC
Lack of members' participation

University of Kwazulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg Campus

Sunday Mass
Weekly Mass at 18H00
Choir practice immediately after
Orientation
Catechism Classes
 Confirmation
 Baptism
Intercampus Visit
Community outreach
 Orphanage Visits
 Hospital visit
 Tinned food collection
Workshop
 Issues affecting us as youth and Catholic students.
Picnic
Farewell plus welcoming function
Stations of the Cross during Lent

University of Kwazulu Natal Westville Campus

Mass Sunday and Wednesday
Bible sharing Friday
Practice on Friday
Catechism class
Orientation (week beginning of the year)
Children's Home visit
Other branch visit

Durban University of Technology (Durban Campus)

Wednesday Mass
Friday face off
Ash Wednesday
Sunday Mass
Library display
AGM
Closing function

Durban University of Technology (Pietermaritzburg)

Bible sharing and Talk Shows on Wednesdays
Opening Ceremony
Sunday Mass
Orphanage visit
Prison visits
Choir Practice

Pilgrimage to Entshongweni
Donation collection Project
Prize giving
Meetings with other Christian organisations.

University of the Western Cape

Fr Mike's Birthday
Committee induction work-shop
 FHI visit and supper
Opening Mass (CPUT & UWC)
Bonteheuwel Parish Mass
Ash Wednesday (ACTS + ANSOC)
Holy Week celebration
 (Mass on Holy Thursday at Claremont, Good Friday, night vigil, Easter
 Sunday, beach/Mass/braai)
National visit
FHI workshop
Mass with Fr Pat
Tuesday nights at Chris Hani Res.
Mothers' Day Celebration
Provincial Tinned Food Collection Mass
Exam Mass

University of Cape Town

Vision and mission
Committee members' profiles
October 2008 projects
 Cake sale donation
 Month of Rosary workshops
February-May 2009 projects
 Orientation week
 Welcome Braai
 Kolbe Days 'Workshops and Retreats'
 The Easter Triduum
 Coffee, Cake and Culture
Major 'Tangent' focus
The Kolbe week

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Bellville Campus)

Since last year's AGM Oct. 2008
 Orientation and recruitment drive
Easter Week
 Palm Sunday
 Confession (Tuesday)
 Good Friday
 Holy Saturday at Chaplaincy House
 Easter Sunday
Visit to Delft (Chaplain's Parish)
Visit to Mfuleni (Community Outreach)

Outing (Braai 'lake on campus')
Tinned food collection
Opening prayer
Pentecost celebration at Delft
Closing mass for First Semester

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Cape Town Campus)

Recognised by the NEC (October 2008)
Since then we have been meeting every Friday for prayers
Recruited members
Challenges
 Finding priest (Chaplain)
 Only allocated budget by LSRC June 2009

University of Free State

Cultural Mass
 Inspired pride in one's culture and diversity among students
Christmas Mass
 Exchange of gifts
 Spiritual dance
Orientation Days
 Welcoming first years
 Recruitment of Catholic students
Fundraising
 Hot dog sale
 Cake sale
Visitations
 High Schools
 Local Parishes
Joint first year function with Central University of Technology
 Interaction with first years (Played games)
 Braai
Home Cells
Annual Rally
Theme: God is faithful are you?
Attendance: 600 youth
Exam Mass
Joined with Central University of Technology
June 16 Youth Rally
Joint Anglican youth service - Theme: Nothing is impossible. Dedicated to the
memory of Father Thabo Lenyatse
Healing Service
 Dedicated to race issues.

Central University of Technology

Events
First years' recruitment
Social functions
Ash Wednesday

Annual Retreat
Hostel Visitation
Bible Discussion
Exam Mass
Youth rally
ABCD Lifestyle Campaign workshop for high school
Visitation to the local Catholic Churches.
Tins and clothes collection
Fund raisers
 Car wash
 Donation Forms
 Dinner
 Sale

North-West University

January
 1st years recruitment during orientation
 Election of Task/committee

February
 Fun day
 Ash Wednesday Mass with VUT
 Fundraising day for the launch

March
 Freshness picnic

April
 Preparation of launch and with V.U.T students

May
 Hosted the Gauteng ABCD lifestyle rally
 16th Launch of Branch
 Exam Mass (with V.U.T)

University of Venda

AGM held At Kruger National Park 15-17 August
First annual provincial ABCD Lifestyle Campaign rally
Exam prayer
Farewell and year-end Function (Phiphidi Resort)
Opening function
Community outreach
Recognition by the SRA (May)
Socials
NEC visit
Exam prayer 2009
First Semester closing
Fundraising for Mafikeng National Conference

University of Limpopo

Election of the new BEC
Distribution of food parcels
ABCD Lifestyle Campaign at Fatima Catholic School
Monthly prayer meeting with Catholic staff
First year's welcome
End of year function (graduate farewell)
Introducing usage of drums to Catholic Culture
Registration with MCSA
Hosted second Provincial Rally

University of Freestate: QwaQwa

Election (BEC)
Activities
Exam Mass
Ash Wednesday
Sacrificism > Rosary + Cross Road+ Donation
First Communion
Orientation
ABCD Lifestyle Campaign
Fundraisers
Tinned Food Collection
Marketing and advertising
Proudly Catholic Day
Cultural Mass
Youth Rally (Bethlehem Diocese)
Tea Party

University of Witwatersrand

February
Orientation week registered 160 new members
Opening Function
Opening function –Party for nothing -Academic Mass

March
Faith and Chips (science and religion)
Maggi's launch

April
Maggis (Soup Kitchen every Monday morning)
Party for Nothing (17th)
Maggis reflection.

May
Maggis (Soup Kitchen every Monday morning)
Party for Nothing (17th)- Student Mass Sun Evenings -Choir
Open mic nyt

CELL GROUPS

CELL GROUP 1

- Mushi Resty
- Smith Vanessa
- Makhawule Snambonga
- Tshoke Lesang
- Lebogang Masha
- Olifant Tshepo
- Patrick Cherulla
- Mxolisi Ndawo
- Nkodi Sarah
- Palesa
- Bofihla Posholi
- Imelda Haines
- Thami Gabashe
- Ntoetsi

CELL GROUP 2

- Sonopo Molahlehi
- Stephen Shotholo
- Bonolo Moagi
- Matthew Bickell
- Lorato Mokwena
- Bajabulile Mbuttha
- Felicity Gebashe
- Neo Diale
- Moshala Madiba
- Mofokeng Setjhaba
- Mofokeng Lefu
- Mofokeng Lefu
- Thabo Thoopo
- Karabelo Dyanti

CELL GROUP 3

- Tshidi Tshola
- S'Bu Masuku
- Epaphraus Selahle
- Edwin Mothlaping
- Garikai Matambo
- Teboho Pule
- Mushoni Bulagi
- Jason Bremner
- Gino Kgopotso Lekhelebana
- Tiisetso Jantjies
- Arnold Okanga
- Keaaleboga Maruping

CELL GROUP 4

- Sello Matsena
- Lerato Motubane
- Kgotso Letsoalo
- Kgotso Letsoalo
- Tshifhiwa Muladzi
- Thabo Sethathi
- Michael Kamson
- Paballa mnguni
- Stanley Izuegbu
- Iris Unimana
- Siyabong Nzuza
- Nthuseng Marake
- Dimakatso Kanono
- Charles
- Katlego Nthabu

CELL GROUP 5

- Majozi Matlhape
- Dineo Ramachakela
- Molebogeng Keamogetswe
- Buhle Mavuso
- Phindile Ngubo
- Thuto Hlalele
- Mmajie Koma
- Thomas Matweru
- Lebohang Mapyane
- Molaba malefu
- Gubevu Maduna
- Gabela Ntsika

CELL GROUP 6

- Lebogang Masha
- Nomfundo Tshabalala
- Obakeng Pule
- Gomotsong Teane
- K.B. Segole
- Nokwanda Ndlovu
- Refilwe Likotsi
- Shaka Dzebu
- Tshagofatso Radise
- Malekhetho Mohale
- Dodo Tshetlanyane
- Ramatelile Litsietsi

CELL GROUP 7

- Sakonda Archford
- Lebogang Leah
- Lydia Mohlahle
- Chesznokov Zungu
- Thabang Nyambe
- Sbusiso Zulu
- Nomfundo Ndlovu
- Thapelo Moloisane
- Nomonde Nomdzinwa
- Susan Lepamo
- Liberata
- Imelda Haines
- Nozipho Xulu

CELL GROUP 8

- Caritus Maselesele
- Getty Choenyana
- Nokubonga Mbanda
- Moses Mkhabela
- Audrey Maloka
- Rosina Nkgapele
- Sphindile Shoba
- Lehlohonolo Morallana
- Lerato Motloung
- Mondli Mthembu
- Mamo