Radiate

News from the College of Transfiguration November 2008

Come and dream with me

A word from the Rector, Revd Dr Bill Domeris

Let me introduce myself. For most of my life, I have been involved in tertiary education. When I was still in my twenties, I had just married Shona (a Geography Teacher) in 1975 when I went from being a Religious Instruction teacher at Boksburg High School, to the Johannesburg College of Education (JCE).

We then went to the UK, where I did my PhD after completing my MA at Wits and not long after that we were appointed as tutors in St John's College (Durham). So in 1979, I began my life-long experience of training priests for Anglican ordination.

A year after returning to South Africa, we came to live in Cape Town and I started as a lecturer in Biblical Studies at UCT. There I tutored for TEE (Theological Education by Extension) in my spare time, while in my full-time teaching I focussed on teacher training, but included theological students in both my undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Several Anglican priests, presently both here and abroad, passed through my classes.

Scholar

Shona and I returned to Johannesburg and I was appointed to WITS in the department of Biblical and Religious Studies. I grew to be an internationally recognised scholar of the Bible publishing about one hundred academic articles, chapters and dictionary entries before leaving the University as Associate Professor in 2002 to go full-time into the priesthood at St Michaels (Bryanston) and as Rector to St Albans (East London).

My link with theological education, including the training of Anglican priests continued during this time. So, in reflection, I suppose it was inevitable that I would eventually end up in the College of the Transfiguration.

Rector Revd Dr. Bill Domeris (back, second from left) with students at the college.

I began my tenure in July this year and have been both stimulated and challenged by life in the College. In my consideration of the work of the College, I had always laid an emphasis on the academic – but living here, I have been overwhelmed by the sense of community and the ethos of spiritual formation that flows out of the life of the college.

It was a kairos moment to realise how important this element is in the training of priests –something I had not experienced since my days in Durham.

Even before coming here, I had been thinking about ways to develop the College to its fullest potential. For example, I have a dream of a library which is airy and light and where students want to spend time enjoying the place, chatting, drinking coffee, in comfortable chairs surrounded by books and computers.

I have a dream of every student with their own computer in their room, and not having to queue for a place in a dark computer lab.

Reaching out

I have a dream of a College where significant numbers of students stay to do postgraduate study and where short courses are a regular means of reaching the wider Anglican Church and indeed beyond that into the Christian body of Southern Africa. I dream about each lecturer having their own office on campus – a place which is attractive and enjoyable to be in. I invite you all to be a part of this process – to come and dream with me.

P.O. Box 77, Grahamstown, 6140 • Tel: (046) 622 3332 • Fax: (046) 622 3877 • Email: enquiries@cott.co.za • Website: www.cott.co.za

Building on solid foundations

When I started my first year of study at the College of the Transfiguration in 2004, I had a very low self esteem, but with the help my colleagues and particularly my lecturers, I developed my low self esteem into a very positive one.

The college focus of forming, informing and transforming students helped me to be successful in completing this wonderful opportunity.

I have been able to apply the skills that I have developed. These, I now have taken on and applied in both my first year as deacon and my second as curate – and which I continue to develop in my ministry.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the platform set for me with the guiding hand of COTT, is a platform that I am able to build on daily and I believe it is able to carry the weight, as my foundation now is a strong one.

Revd Mark Andrews

Revd Mark Andrews
(COTT Graduate)
St. Saviours, Claremont

An opportunity which changed my life

My name is Indileni Hilukiluah and I am currently studying at the University of Kwazulu-Natal thanks to a bursary from the Biko Bowcott Trust. I am a former COTT student. I come from the Anglican Diocese of Namibia, where I grew up and went to school for most of my life.

Indileni Hilukiluah

In 2002 I felt a calling to serve in church ministry. The aspiration to study theology persisted even though I did not have the financial means to do so. The possibility came when in 2005 I commenced my first year at COTT thanks to funding from St James' Church New York.

COTT not only fulfilled my academic aspirations, but the multi-cultural environment formed and transformed me in a spiritual, personal and cultural manner – as a woman, a future leader, an African, a human being, a Christian and a member of the global community.

Indileni Hilukiluah
(Graduate of COTT from Namibia)

Outreach to Makana Primary School

Students taking Christian Education courses at COTT have been applying their skills twice a week with young people at Makana Primary School in Grahamstown.

This special outreach has honed the students' skills in setting goals and objectives as they design activities to reach the learners at Makana.

Visiting lecturer Dorothy Linthicum, adjunct instructor in Christian Education at Virginia Theological Seminary in the United States, attended sessions at Makana School in August. She said, 'The college students demonstrate remarkable leadership skills that touched the young people on many different levels'.

COTT student Noluthando Gixana felt empowered by this experience. She said that this project has helped to open her eyes to begin to appreciate the usefulness of theological theory in Church practice.

Our students visit the Makana Primary School twice a week.

Helping to transform lives

I arrived at COTT in April 2002 a devastated person, having fled Zimbabwe and left my family in Harare where things were heating up.

In many ways I would describe myself at that point as someone whose faith was on the fringe of disappearance.

There were many things that influenced me and have impacted greatly on me since my time at COTT. One of these things was the Chapel life. I came to realise that with all my passion and energy, I could only do as much as God willed

And since I left COTT in 2003 I have been privileged to undertake massive programmes which have changed people's lives, and mine too: work in training the laity in the Diocese of Manicaland, the intervention to protect thousands of Zimbabweans who were made destitute by the land reform programme, the intervention on Operation Murambistvina where thousands of people were suddenly rendered homeless and jobless, advocating for political change in Zimbabwe with Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition and recently in South Africa for refugees who were affected by the xenophobic attacks.

Nicholas Mkaronda
(Fomer COTT student)

I enjoy being here

I am Maria Domingos from Angola. I have been a church member from a young age and as an adult have been involved as an evangelist at a parish level (St John the Baptist parish) in the capital of Luanda. I am currently the Coordinator of the HIV/AIDS programme at a diocesan level.

I came to the College of the Transfiguration at the beginning of this year to study theology. As far as my experience goes in the college I have learned to live with different people from different cultural backgrounds. I am trying to build good relationships as far as my pastoral ministry is concerned and I know that this experience of the college will continue to influence my future ministry in Jesus Christ.

Maria Domingos

Maria Domigos
(Current Student)