



Cathedral Church of St George the Martyr

## 'Social Outreach' Ministry : Reportback to the Parish

9 December 2008

Dear Fellow Parishioners

Earlier this year the Cathedral Council mandated the undertaking of a limited evaluation of The Arch project, the Cathedral's outreach to the poor of the central city area. Fr Chris Ahrends was commissioned to undertake this evaluation which, according to the brief he was given, would

- Clarify the structural relations between The Arch project and the Cathedral. Such a review is also to focus on allocating responsibility for policy, marketing/brand building and fundraising;
- Clarify the accountability mechanisms in terms of lines of reporting, HR and financial accountability;
- Initiate a limited assessment of the services offered by The Arch project; and
- Make recommendations on the way forward.

In his report Fr Chris recommended, *inter alia*, that "the time is ripe for the Cathedral to create new possibilities in the ministry of social outreach or social transformation. In order to create these new possibilities within a ministry of social transformation, it is recommended that the re-visioning of the Cathedral's entire ministry of social outreach (of which The Arch is a part) take place."

Members of the parish were invited to a meeting at which it was decided in principle to accept the above recommendations and a process to pursue them was embarked upon led by Fr Terry Lester. Alongside discussions amongst those who had volunteered to be part of this process, a number of conversations were opened up with a range of other stakeholders in the city, who are also concerned with and/or are providing services to the poorest of the poor living in central Cape Town, many of them on the streets. These stakeholders included other churches and faith communities in the city, the Cape Town Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry, The Haven Night Shelters, The Big Issue, Cape Town Partnership and others.

At a meeting held on 1 November 2008 it was decided to recommend to the Cathedral Council and the congregation at large a way forward for the parish to explore further and develop the social outreach ministry of our church in the city. The key components of the recommended way forward are as follows:

That an interim social ministry group/'holding group'/'think tank' be established with the following mandate:

1. To provide interim support to Mary van Blerk and her team who have volunteered to continue sustaining the ministry of The Arch while its future direction is clarified;
2. To develop, in consultation with the Cathedral Council, an interim framework for relating to and addressing the needs of the 'street people' – including a communication plan and an 'enforcement' strategy;
3. To bring together and consult those within the parish who are currently taking responsibility for the Cathedral's various existing social outreach efforts including The Arch, the Cathedral HIV & AIDS Task Team (CHATT), sandwiches for the homeless on Sundays and the food parcels distributed from the Parish Office;

4. To invite parishioners willing to commit their talents and time to join the Cathedral's social outreach ministry and participate in charting the way forward for this ministry;
5. To draw together a summary of what we have heard during our abovementioned stakeholder conversations;
6. To reflect on and set out clearly the theological imperative for a social outreach ministry and the rationale for such a ministry to take particular forms;
7. In the light of the above
  - to review the content of our current social outreach ministry,
  - to document comprehensively the services which we already provide, the strategies that we currently employ and the partnerships with other bodies/institutions/structures within the city that we currently have,
  - to surface and check the assumptions on which our existing ministries are based,
  - to consider what the effects (including the unintended consequences) of these ministries are, and
  - to the extent that it might prove necessary, to rethink what we do;
8. To investigate the status of the Cathedral's PBO status and if necessary to apply for new NPO and PBO numbers to enable and facilitate obtaining funding from government sources and potential private and corporate donors;
9. By no later than the Cathedral's annual vestry meeting in 2009, to formulate a proposed corporate vision for the Cathedral's social outreach ministry with an initial set of strategies/projects/services as well as assessments of sustainability and preliminary timelines.

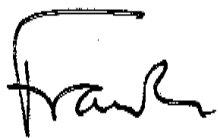
The Cathedral Council at its meeting held on 12 November 2008 approved the formation of an interim social ministry group.

An initial meeting of this interim social ministry group will be held at **13h00 (till 15h00) on Saturday 31 January 2009 in the Dean King Hall.**

**All interested parishioners are not only welcome but warmly encouraged to attend** whether you already participate in one of the Cathedral's existing 'social ministries' (eg The Arch, the Cathedral HIV & AIDS Task Team [CHATT], sandwiches for the homeless on Sundays, sandwiches for the mothers at Red Cross Children's Hospital, visiting of the sick) or whether you have an interest in becoming newly involved at the Cathedral in one or other form of socially-oriented ministry.

It would be helpful if you could, please, let me know if you plan to attend. If you would want to attend but can't and would like to give me feedback on any of the above, please be in touch. You can phone me on either 021 706 2114 or 082 790 8948 or email me on [moltenofamily@intermail.co.za](mailto:moltenofamily@intermail.co.za).

Yours in Christ



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