



LOVEMUSTACT

Partnerships for Sustainable Education

*"Love Must Act as light must shine and fire must burn."
-Fr. James Otis Sargent Huntington, OHC*

Come and See: Holy Cross School in Makhanda, South Africa



The inspiration for Love Must Act's Come and See trips is a story St. John told of two disciples of John the Baptist following at a distance behind Jesus one day. "When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.' They came and saw

where he was staying, and they remained with him that day." (1:38-39)

At Love Must Act we believe Jesus stays with the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed, and that's where we, too, meet him and learn to stay. That's why we took a group of nine pilgrims to South Africa, to see where Jesus stays in post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in educating children in a very challenging environment.

Our visit started in Johannesburg. It was the perfect introduction to the apartheid past of South Africa. The Apartheid Museum was our first stop, which gave an excellent, though highly disturbing, foundation for understanding recent South African history. That was followed by a visit to Constitution Hill including the Building 4 prison, which housed apartheid offenders including Mahatma Gandhi, and the Constitutional Court, the architecture of which does a truly wonderful job integrating the injustice of the past into the promise of the future, unlike our own tendency to hide the unpleasant and embarrassing from view.

Then the main event—Holy Cross School. We arrived in Makhanda to a lovely dinner at the home of our principal Kary McConnachie and her husband Jock. South Africa, especially Makhanda, has load shedding to cope with power shortages, so dinner was by candlelight, which just made everything seem even more hospitable. We were joined in Makhanda by Br. Roger Stewart, OHC, who represented the Order and its commitment to the

school. He was a delightful addition to our group and helped our pilgrims understand the fundamentally spiritual nature of Holy Cross School and its history.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the group spent time in classrooms. Half were in the foundation grades one day and the intermediate grades the next, so everyone got to see everything. This was amazing to watch for those of us who had been there before. The learners and teachers were buoyed by the presence of their American guests who were interested in what they were doing. The Americans were transfixed by what they saw and obviously deeply touched. It was readily apparent in their eyes. They virtually sparkled.

Each grade had prepared a presentation, which took place in the chapel. It was just amazing. Frankly, it brought me to tears. There was moving poetry and spirited (to say the least) singing and dancing. I kept thinking there was one grade 7 boy I recognized. It took me a minute, but he is the boy originally described to me some years ago as “feral.” He had been found living in a cemetery after both his parents died. He was naked and scrounging for food scraps. Someone got him connected to some distant relatives who enrolled him at HCS. I first met him when he sang the introduction to the Lion King at a school play. Incredible, strong voice. He had grown up so much and had all the characteristics of a normal early teenage boy. He now has a future.

The first full day we were there was the Feast of the Holy Cross, which we celebrated that evening with a Eucharist in the chapel and a dinner in the refectory. Bishop Ebenezer Ntlali, our dear and supportive friend, joined us as the presider. We were also graced throughout our visit by the Rev. Rachel Ssekimpi, the chaplain of the Diocesan School for Girls. She also takes pastoral care of the Holy Cross students.

I made the announcement about the new principal, Nicci Hayes, at the end of the service. There is more information about Nicci in this newsletter.

On Friday we said farewell to the school, which had a little prayer and singing event for us, and then off for a game drive at Three Valleys. In addition to being a game preserve, it hosts a predator rescue program, which takes in big cats from bad situations. There were several lions, a black leopard, caracal, a cheetah, spotted genets, and a Siberian tiger. The group was enthralled, and the facility presents a volunteer opportunity for future visitors. Our stay in Makhanda ended with a lovely surprise party to mark Kary’s exceptional service and well-deserved retirement.

We went on to Cape Town Saturday morning. There is a wonderful new Desmond Tutu exhibit, which introduces the church’s role in ending apartheid. Sunday was at St. George’s Cathedral, where we also visited Archbishop Tutu’s grave. Then it was on to Robben Island, which is jarring but somehow infused with hope in the telling of the story by a former inmate.

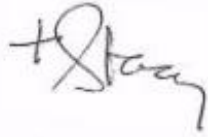
It was home from there. Here’s the main point. Not only did we come and see. Lives were changed. That was the point.

The whole idea of Love Must Act has always been that there are two

beneficiaries to our work. There are poor children who receive something educational and a potential antidote to the cycle of poverty. And there are more materially well-off Americans who have the potential for spiritual transformation through their relationships with the children, which in my understanding of God, is a direct experience of Jesus, by whatever name he might be known. This pilgrimage was the tangible proof that this is happening. I am so very, very happy about it.

Come with us next time!

Agape,



Bishop Stacy Sauls
Founder and President

Bishop Sauls' reflections appear on our [website](#) and our [Facebook page](#).

**A Sermon on the South Africa Pilgrimage
by
The Rev. Michael C. Fedewa
Love Must Act Board Member and South Africa Pilgrim**



You may remember that last month my wife Linda and I went on a “Come

and See" pilgrimage to South Africa. We went as friends and supporters of an organization, "Love Must Act," that supports an Anglican School in Makhanda, South Africa. Holy Cross School was established by the brothers of the Order of the Holy Cross, an Episcopal Order of Benedictine Monks founded here in the United States in 1884. The title of the organization, Love Must Act, was inspired by the words of James Otis Sargent Huntington, one of their earliest members. "Love must act as light must shine, and fire must burn. Love must act as light must shine and fire must burn."

Our pilgrimage began in Johannesburg. There we visited the National Apartheid Museum, which documents the birth and history of apartheid as well as the struggle to overcome it. We visited the notorious prison where many of the heroic men, women, and even children who struggled against apartheid suffered and died. We visited Soweto, one of the townships near Johannesburg that really was one of the centers of resistance to apartheid. Soweto was the home of Nelson Mandela and his family before he was imprisoned. We visited the Supreme Court and learned a little about the new Republic of South Africa that was born when the new constitution was written and approved in the mid-1990s.

We also traveled to Cape Town. We visited the museum dedicated to remembering the work and ministry of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. We visited the beautiful cathedral where he preached and the grave in the cathedral where he is buried.

We also visited Robben Island, where Mandela was imprisoned for over 20 years, and from which he was finally released in 1990.

We also were able to spend some time as tourists. Unfortunately, I spent a few days in Covid quarantine and missed the trip to the game preserve. Fortunately, I was able to visit some vineyards and experience some of the beauty of the mountains and ocean near Cape Town. We took a cable car up Table Mountain and saw scenery as beautiful as anything I have ever seen.

While in South Africa, I began rereading the autobiographical memoir of Nelson Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom*. I had read the book when it was first published in 1994. It was a much richer experience to read it while I was there immersed in the history of South Africa.

Our trip to South Africa has been very much on my mind this week as I have spent time reflecting on the Gospel parable of the widow and the unjust judge. The woman knows her rights, and she will not back down. She persists. The judge, who acknowledges that he doesn't care about God or the woman or anyone else finally relents and grants her justice. This is the story of South Africa. Just as God is on the side of the widow who cries for justice, God was on the side of Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu and the other men and women who fought against apartheid. So too, God remains on the side of those who stand for justice in our day. God is on the side of the vulnerable. God is on the side of the least, the lost, and the lonely.

God is on the side of the refugees. God is with those who flee war, those who flee oppression, and those who flee climate disasters. God is on the side of the victims of gun violence. God is on the side of children and others who are imprisoned and enslaved by human traffickers. God is on their side,

and the day will come when the justice of God will triumph.

As disciples of Jesus, the incarnation of God of justice, we are called to take our place with those who are most vulnerable. We are called to stand with them. We are called to be their voices crying for justice. The parable is a call to pray always and not lose heart.

But, my friends, we know that prayer is not enough. We also must act. Fire must burn. Light must shine. Love must act. We must pray. Prayer is the fuel that empowers us to act. We persevere in prayer so we might have the strength to put our love into action. As we persevere in prayer, as we persevere in action, justice and mercy shall prevail.

When we were in South Africa, the highlight was our visit to the Holy Cross School. There, in that school, lives were being changed. Not only were the children getting an excellent education, but they were also hearing the good news of the Gospel. Most of these children came from the poorest streets of the townships. Their lives were surrounded by poverty, despair, and violence, but in the school, they were treated with respect as beloved sons and daughters of God. In that school, they were taught the Gospel of Good News that the God of Jesus Christ is on their side.

The first week Linda and I were home from South Africa, we made what was for us a sizable donation to Love Must Act. We also increased our monthly pledge to Love Must Act and Holy Cross School. I've brought some flyers with more information about the school. There is information about the school. I've also included an address if you'd like to donate to the school. Most importantly, I also ask that you hold the school in your prayers today and during the week to come. And, as you persevere in prayer, look for ways to be a voice for the voiceless. Look for ways to act for justice. No. Remember prayer is the fuel for love. Remember,

As fire must burn. As light must shine. So also, love must act.

Reflections on a Pilgrimage to South Africa
by
Linda Fedewa
Friend of Love Must Act and South Africa Pilgrim

I arrived in South Africa with absolutely no expectations about what I would see or experience.

I came away truly changed forever. I felt completely at home and embraced by the people I met at the school who allowed me to be involved with minimal meal preparation and clean up and to interact with the students. The joy and love on the campus were palpable. The



children were excited to present a beautiful concert that allowed them to share traditional music and some that were created for us (older kids put together an amapiano piece), showing how gifted they are. It was such a heartwarming experience that I didn't want to leave. I still think about some of the students and the incredible talent they have. It made me more committed to Love Must Act and giving those and other children access to an education that will allow them to help make their dreams of art school, becoming a teacher, maybe, come true.

I was astounded to see how much of the country lives. The

abject poverty is indescribable. I have traveled to other third-world countries and seen poverty, but not to the extent seen in South Africa merely because of the number of people living in those conditions. The hardship of finding work and traveling to work was incredible as well. Waitstaff and store workers said that they travel 45 mins to an hour and a half each way to work, often depending on transportation provided by the employer. The challenges they face daily are astounding. Equally surprising is how they were just so sweet and happy (which may have been a visible sign of their gratitude for the income opportunity).

Some things I am still processing. I cannot stop thinking about the myriad similarities between the Native Americans of North America and the African Natives— music, dance, respect for the land and animals, and ultimately how they were treated by invading Europeans. There are so many other ways they are similar.

I am of a generation that protested apartheid and canceled credit cards because companies wouldn't divest. To walk the ground where Steven Biko, Nelson Mandela, and Bishop Desmond Tutu walked was profoundly moving. I think the most overwhelming thing for me is trying to reconcile how white supremacy has manifested itself on many continents. Visiting the prisons where "political prisoners" were kept and killed, then hearing from those who lived through it to share their stories was gut-wrenching. I marvel at the change brought about by the endless efforts of Mandela and Tutu and others (Winnie Mandela, Helen Suzman, Albertina Sisulu), though not entirely without violence. Certainly, the words and spirit of those men and women had an impact.

The visit to Constitution Hill made me realize that God brought together remarkable men and women who would persistently lead despite the risk to their lives. The people who worked on the constitution were divinely inspired, as evidenced by the results of their work. The 1996 constitution includes human dignity, achieving equality, advancing human rights and freedoms, non-racialism and non-sexism, Supremacy of the constitution and

the rule of law, universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections, and a multiparty system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness, and openness.

Admittedly, there is still much work to be done, but when talking with people about the progress and current government, I repeatedly heard “we are moving forward and cannot dwell on the past.” It felt like the spirit of reconciliation has been moving through the country, despite the dire circumstances of daily life.

Come and See
by
The Rev. Margaret Shanks
Love Must Act Board Member and South Africa Pilgrim



Come and See. That's a great name for the trip that we took to South Africa. Come and see. It was a wonderful experience, and I hope to have the opportunity to return. The primary purpose was for us to experience the Holy Cross School (HCS) and to do that within the context of the challenges and opportunities of education in post-apartheid South Africa. Apartheid ended thirty years ago, but much of the educational infrastructure has not recovered. The capacity

to serve all the children in need of education is a huge challenge for this still re-forming country. Hence the importance and the grace of this small, well-run, loving school for children, most of whom are financially poor.

We began our trip in Johannesburg, where we had a short, intense course on South African apartheid history. I was familiar with some of the history of South Africa – remembering the great Nelson Mandela and our own Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. But it was quite different to be there and visit the Apartheid Museum and hear the stories told by the people of South Africa. The word dignity is what continues to come back to me. The dignity of the people we met, from different races and walks of life, who spoke of their own personal works of reconciliation. Dignity is what we heard as they spoke of the pride they have in their country and their thirty-year-old constitution. The constitution guarantees the right to **dignity** for all people.

The high point for me in the time in Johannesburg was the visit to Constitution Hill. At that location, there stands part of a former prison with an atrocious history. Adjacent to this is the new Constitutional Court, built from bricks from that same prison. The design of this building and courtroom was created by many people across the country. Everything in the building is symbolic of the new future they are trying to build. In this high court, only civil rights cases are heard. There are eleven justices, and the court is always open to the public. This is the highest court in the land whose sole job is to ensure the rights of human dignity, equality, and freedom for all people.

I recently attended our Diocesan Convention, where the guest speaker was Sean McConnell from Episcopal Relief and Development. He talked about Asset Based Community Development, another area I thought I already knew enough about. But as often is the case, I had a lot to learn. I sat and listened to him speak about the impact of the ways we bring about change in the world. We can do actions *to* or *for* others, but the only way to create lasting change is to work *with* others. While I listened, my thoughts kept returning to the HCS and the idea behind *Come and See*. Many of Sean's words resonated and stayed with me: Ask not what's wrong but what's strong. Listen, listen, listen to the members of the community. Start small. Nurture grassroots community leaders. Work for equity and justice. Don't start something in the community that will die if you walk away. With love, the more you give it away, the more it grows. The words resonated because they describe the Holy Cross School and the way it has been founded.

Money is needed, of course. But the most important need and the greatest assets are the people and the relationships- the relationships formed in that community between the teachers and the students and their families and with the larger communities of educators and the relationship formed across the boundaries of country and culture. Come and see; come and grow in knowledge. Come and be engaged in the holy work of building community.

Love must act as light must shine and fire must burn.

**It's All About Us
by
Mary Jane Amick
Love Must Act Board Member and South Africa Pilgrim**



I just returned from my 15th trip to my now second home, Makhanda (previously Grahamstown), South Africa. My journey began in 2007 when I met four travelers from Grahamstown who were in Lexington, Kentucky, to investigate the possibility of taking our program Reading Camp back home with them.

At the invitation of Bishop Stacy Sauls, I was able to host “the Grahamstown Four” at my home for dinner, and within 10 minutes I knew these people were going to change my life. I didn’t know what that meant, but it was a very strong feeling.

The changes began in 2008 when I traveled to be camp nurse at the first South African Reading Camp, a role I returned to fill for ten years. After camp, it was a natural transition for me to become involved with Holy Cross School and Love Must Act. Every year, through both programs, I was immersed in, and surrounded by, groups of beautiful eager children who came to us seeking improved skills in written and spoken English. Every day I could see them growing and transforming in a variety of ways. Every day I could see the face of God over and over in each of them. Every day I was thrilled that I could see and help them learn and grow. And every day, I continued to think that it was me helping to transform their lives.

Gradually, especially through conversations with Bishop Stacy over the years, I began to see that the core value was in the mutual relationships developed and what we learned, and how we grew through the process. We now quasi-laughingly say, “It’s all about us,” and if through the process, some children learn, grow, and are loved, then that’s the icing on the cake.

The Principal Search Committee is delighted to announce that Nicci Hayes has been selected as the next principal of Holy Cross School. She overflows with educational experience and teaching ability. She will begin her new duties on January 1, 2023.

Nicci is a graduate of Rhodes University, from which she earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in education. She has extensive experience teaching at Victoria Girls' High School, The Diocesan School for Girls, and St. Andrew's College in Makhanda and was the principal of Numbulelo Secondary School. She has been a very welcome addition to the Holy Cross School staff this year as our Grade 7 teacher. Many of our recent American visitors sat in on her class and remarked at her quiet yet authoritative style and the rapt attention with which her learners were engaged.

As strong as her credentials are, what stands out even more is her commitment to what she's doing, her unshakable integrity, and her faithfulness to her principles. We are so very blessed to have her. You must come meet her yourself!

Love Must Act

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