



**The Archdiocese of Johannesburg
through the Department of Evangelisation
and Renew International
presents**



An Archdiocese wide, parish based, process to lead the faithful in scriptural, spiritual development through small Christian communities.



Fr Duncan Tsoke addressing the Archdiocesan Core Community at the opening of the Training Session.



From left: Rev Neil Phillipson, Fr Tony Thouard, Sr Marie Cooper SJC, Sr Honora Nolty OP, Fr Duncan Tsoke, Odilon Molapo.

The Vicar-General supports RENEW Africa:

ADDRESS BY Fr DUNCAN TSOKE AT THE OPENING OF TRAINING OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN CORE COMMUNITY FOR RENEW Africa

On behalf of His Grace the Archbishop, and myself the Vicar General, I welcome you to the beginning of an exciting period for our Archdiocese, The start of **RENEW Africa** in Johannesburg. We are bringing **RENEW Africa** because it is a parish run initiative which means that we, the parishioners of Johannesburg, will create a spirit of renewal in our churches, our homes and with our friends and family. In the materialistic world in which we live amidst greed and corruption, we Catholics need to strengthen ourselves, our families and communities to understand what is right and more importantly – to live the way that is right. The Renew process that we will undertake provides scriptural guidance, spiritual reflection, prayer and at the end of every week during the Sessions the group will commit to a practical action that will enable them to interact with the community around them. If we all enter the process with the intent to arrive,

together, at being committed, caring, conscientious, Christian, Catholics who lead their communities toward a better life – then we will be the people Christ wants us to be.

Sister Marie Cooper came to us from RENEW International to provide us with the tools we will need. RENEW International is a Catholic organisation which develops parish-based Catholic programmes for Evangelisation.

Leaders have been selected from volunteers from every Deanery to form the Archdiocesan Core Community which will initiate the process.

I thank each and every one of you of the Archdiocesan Core Community for giving your time, your effort, and your commitment to the future of RENEW Africa in the Archdiocese. Through RENEW Africa we can enrich our parish, our family and our friends with the knowledge of Christ as we strive to become better Christians.

The Process has begun with the training this weekend and further training later this year and earlier next year. Soon the parishes will appoint their Parish Core Communities, Parish Liturgy groups; and

Small Christian Communities.

The Archdiocesan Core Community will go to them and train them in the functions they have to perform to get **RENEW Africa** going through the five Seasons which will take us through to 2014.

The first Season will be in Spring 2012 and after that the parishes of the Archdiocese will be moving forward together in renewal – with Hope for a growth in our faith – and Joy as we work together as a community- reaching out to those around us in and through Jesus Christ toward a better Christian lifestyle.



Sister Marie training the Archdiocesan Core Community.

Fr Tony Thouard OFM
Vicar for Evangelisation asks:

WHY DO RENEW Africa?

RENEW Africa - Gathered as God's Family has been welcomed in our Archdiocese as a wonderful response to a request Archbishop Buti put to the Department of Evangelisation last year: that it find a way of providing ongoing faith formation for our people that is parish based.

Archbishop Hurley invited **RENEW** to South Africa in 1989 to help the Archdiocese of Durban implement the South African Church's Pastoral Plan: 'Community Serving Humanity'. Nine Catholic dioceses including Johannesburg undertook the **RENEW** experience with great success and many Anglican dioceses did the same.

RENEW Africa has grown out of the **RENEW** experience. Much of its material and themes comes, not just from Africa, but from South Africa. **RENEW Africa** has already proved its worth in dioceses as far away as Nigeria and at home here in South Africa.

Why **RENEW Africa** now in Johannesburg Archdiocese ...

- **RENEW Africa** uses a process that has worked in over twenty countries around the world and has touched the lives of more than 25 million people. **We would not like to be left behind!**
- **RENEW Africa** promotes prayer, learning, sharing, mutual support and calls all who take part to mission, to evangelisation. **Here is a tool we can use to enrich our parishes and our Archdiocese as a whole.**
- **RENEW Africa** does not replace anything that is already at work in our Archdiocese but it complements and strengthens what is now being done. **RA** encourages many more to be active in the life and mission of our Church. Much too often we hear that all the work is done by a few. **Here we have a process to help many more become involved in the life and ministry of the Church.**
- Those responsible for putting together the themes for **RENEW Africa** first listened to what people around South Africa were saying. **The themes we will discuss in the small groups therefore reflect our concerns, for example healing and self reliance.**
- We will begin **RENEW Africa** in our parishes soon after the 2012 SACBC INTERDIOCESAN CONSULTATION comes to a close. **It will give us a great tool for following up on the outcomes of the consultation.**
- **The most important reason for undertaking RENEW Africa is that it will help us to be evangelised and to evangelise - the very reasons for the existence of the Church and the reason why each one of us was called by name by the Lord at our Baptism!**



In 2007 the Diocese of Port Elizabeth began preparing for the launch of **RENEW**

Africa: Gathered as God's Family. **RENEW Africa** is a parish-centred diocesan wide process of evangelization and spiritual renewal that assists with the establishment of Small Christian Communities (SCC's). The purpose of these communities is to invite people to pray together, reflect on Scriptures, deepen communion with one another and with Christ and to reach out in service to others. The process encourages the development of new lay leadership, an essential element in a truly self-sustaining church.

Small Christian Communities (SCC) are usually made up of 8 to 10 members who meet on a regular basis. During the "Seasons of **RENEW Africa**" the communities will meet once a week for six weeks. There are two seasons each year in which participants are invited to reflect on a particular theme. Between seasons Small Christian Communities are invited to meet on a regular basis – this can be once every week or once every second week, depending on the wishes of the SCC. In-between seasons SCC's use a resource book called **PRAYERTIME: Faith Sharing Reflections on the Sunday Gospels.**

The process has been widely accepted through the diocese. Now, 4 years down the road SCC's continue to meet on a regular basis. The following are some comments from people regarding the impact of **RENEW Africa** and Small Christian Communities on their lives:

One person wrote "**RENEW Africa** has helped me to grow more spiritually and deepen my faith. It has taught me how to forgive and to reconcile with people when I thought I was not going to talk with them anymore – because of what they did to me. But I say proudly that through my participation in **RENEW** sessions I have been able to forgive them."

Another wrote: "I have learnt that God created people in his image, but all are different in their own ways. No two



people are the same, therefore you have to accept people for who they are."

In one of the Small Christian Community evaluations the leader wrote: "One member reported that thanks to the readings and sharings he knows how to respond better to people who are sick, especially with HIV/AIDS." Another leader reported, "One young man said 'Why was this not done many years ago? I feel so renewed and revived'".

The **RENEW Africa** process calls for systemic change.

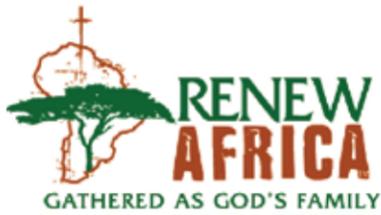
As such it has not been without its struggles, particularly in parishes where the selection process for inviting leaders for the Parish Core Community was not followed. One of the things that many parishes struggle with is "the same people doing everything." Where parishes followed the Four Steps for Inviting Leaders, which is part

of the initial training sessions, they reported a significant number of 'new' people becoming involved and a smoother process overall. Where the process was not followed, inevitably, it was the people who are already overcommitted that were left to carry the burden, with predictable outcomes.

Having said this, there is no doubt that Small Christian Communities transform parish life bringing new energy and life to the local church. Every parish that has committed to the **RENEW Africa** process gives testimony to an increased involvement in parish ministry, a growth in outreach to the poor, and a greater awareness of the importance of the word of God in daily life.

Father Jerry Browne, **RENEW Africa**, Port Elizabeth Diocese.





Men's Groups will enjoy RENEW Africa



FOUR STEPS FOR INVITING LEADERS

Preparation:

A representative group of the parish is asked to pray and reflect on the qualities being sought and to write down the names of those they would like to present together with the gifts and qualities of each person on their list.

Step One:

In an atmosphere of prayer and reflection, the priest convenes the Parish Council (or another suitable group) to pray for those whose names have been submitted, and to ask the assistance of the Holy Spirit for themselves to discern and invite the right people. After the prayer, they discuss each person presented and their qualities and draw up a "short list" of about twice the number of people required.

Step Two:

Each person on the "short list" is personally invited to a meeting to find out more

about **RENEW Africa** (or the ministry in question). The person doing the inviting lets the invitee know why his or her name has surfaced in the discernment.

Step Three:

At the meeting, the role and responsibilities of the particular ministry (e.g. Parish Core Community) are explained and the **RENEW Africa** materials are shown and the process is explained. The candidates are asked to take some time to reflect, pray, consult a spouse, etc. A date is set when the person who invited will call each person to ask for his or her reply.

Step Four:

The candidates who decline are thanked for their time and for considering the ministry. The candidates who accept are thanked and notified of their first meeting as the Parish Core Community.

Follow up:

The priest and/or Parish Council sees to it that the candidates receive the materials necessary for their training workshop and that all have transportation to the training venue. This same process is followed by the Parish Core Community to invite Small Community Leaders and other volunteers to assist with the **RENEW Africa** process.



Soweto Deanery Meeting.

Sister Marie Cooper writes: RENEW Africa Inviting to Ministry

RENEW International has fostered one of the fastest growing Christian spiritual renewal efforts in the world. A key process in renewal is the calling forth of leadership in each parish. The Spirit-led process continues to enable priests and their lay associates to identify, invite and welcome new leaders not only for **RENEW Africa**, but also for any and all ministries in the parish.



Sister Marie Cooper addressing the Soweto Deanery.



The Six Seasons of **RENEW Africa** are:

SPRING 2012 : SEASON ONE : MEET CHRIST TODAY : Claiming Jesus as my Lord and Saviour.

PRAYERTIME: Faith Sharing Reflections on the Sunday Gospels.

LENT 2013 : SEASON TWO : HEALING THE BODY OF CHRIST : A Catholic Spirituality.

PRAYERTIME: Faith Sharing Reflections on the Sunday Gospels.

SPRING 2013 : SEASON THREE : WE ARE CHURCH : Building a self-sustaining church.

PRAYERTIME: Faith Sharing Reflections on the Sunday Gospels.

LENT 2014 : SEASON FOUR : SHARING THE GOOD NEWS : Catholic Evangelisation.

PRAYERTIME: Faith Sharing Reflections on the Sunday Gospels.

SPRING 2014 : SEASON FIVE : THE CHURCH IN AFRICA TODAY at the service of Justice, Reconciliation and Peace.

THEREAFTER ; WHY CATHOLIC? A series based on the Catholic Catechism. A whole new programme spread over some years.

Youth can enjoy RENEW Africa in their own peer groups if they wish.



The Pre-launch Programme

RENEW INTERNATIONAL formed **RENEW Africa** and together they have begun training the



ARCHDIOCESAN CORE COMMUNITY who will begin to train the PARISH PRIEST AND PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL in the task of selecting a

PARISH CORE COMMUNITY who will run **RENEW Africa** in the parish using



LITURGY COMMITTEE, MISSION TEAM AND INVITATIONAL MINISTRY FOR SIGN UP SUNDAY to form



SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES which will begin Season One in October 2012.



Sister Marie addressing the Western Deanery

Choosing the Parish Core Community

- PARISH PRIEST OR DELEGATE will lead
- Include NEW FACES
- CATECHIST FORMATION STAFF
- YOUTH must be involved
- GOOD ORGANISERS
- GOOD COMMUNICATORS
- Include WARD / BLOCK LEADERS
- And SODALITY LEADERS



Core Community Training

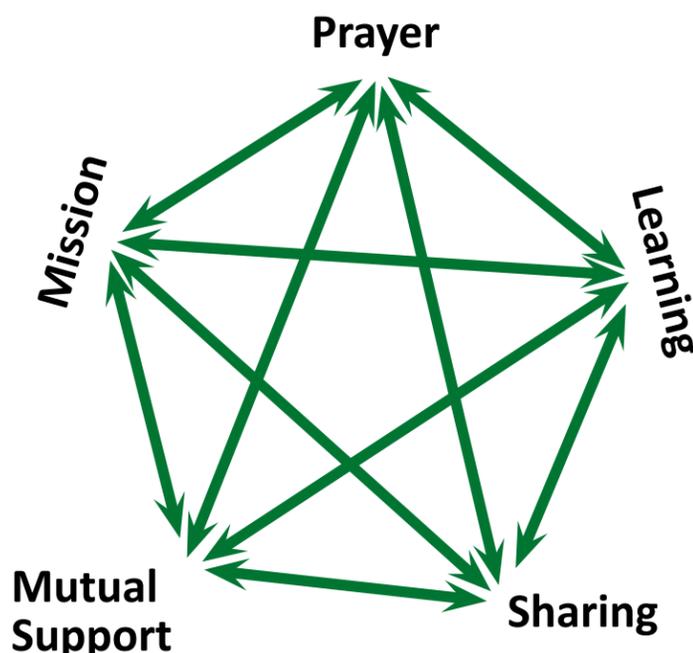


Sister Marie meets the Northern Deanery.



At Archdiocesan Core Community Training

Essential Interrelationships of the Small Christian Communities



WHEN SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES MEET

- Did we achieve last week's action?
- Prayer and hymns
- Scriptural reading and Faith Sharing
- Mission to carry out action in the community before next week

RENEW Africa process:

- 5** Seasons of
- 6** weeks during which the Small Christian Communities meet
- 1** once a week for approximately
- 90** minutes

Season One begins on October 15, 2012.

Season Two will be in Lent 2013.

In between Seasons of **RENEW Africa** Small Christian Communities will partake in **PRAYERTIME** – faith sharing reflections on the Sunday Gospels.

After **RENEW Africa** is complete in 2014 Small Christian Communities will be able to continue with

WHY CATHOLIC?

Which is a series based on the Catholic Catechism

RENEW Africa website
www.renewintl.org/renewafrica

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