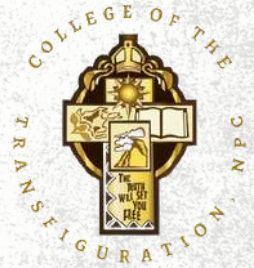


Seminario Gazette Newsletter

VOLUME 1, 2025



The 2025 Staff & Seminarians taking the annual College Photo at Freedom Square

COLLEGE OF TRANSFIGURATION, NPC

JUN - DEC 2025

*"We must have the boldness and faith of Abraham to leave the familiar and well known, to venture into the unknown, into a land we do not know, in order to be surprised to find that we had not preceded God there. Our faith is a faith of ever new beginnings."
(Tutu, The College of the Transfiguration Journal: First Anniversary Issue, February 1994, p. 6)*

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AN ORDINAND'S PRAYER **BISHOP BRIAN, DIOCESE OF KIMBERLEY & KURUMAN**

Lord Jesus, Radiant One,
Who shone with the glory of the Godhead,
Illumine our minds and set our hearts aflame,
That we may see the divine reflected in the human,
And know the power of your transforming love.

As we stand on the mountaintop of our theological studies,
Grant us the courage to descend into the valleys below,
Where the needs of your people, and the challenges of our time, await.
May our learning never be divorced from the realities of the world,
But rooted in a profound encounter with the Triune God.

Strengthen us, O Lord, to wrestle with complex theological questions,
To engage in faithful dialogue, even when the way forward is unclear.
Let not our faith falter, nor our commitment waver,
For you have prepared us and equipped us for this holy work.

When the darkness presses in, and the path seems obscured,
Remind us of the Transfiguration's enduring light.
That even in the midst of suffering and sin,
Your radiant presence can still shine forth,
Guiding us and empowering our ministry.

Lord Jesus, Radiant One,
As we continue on our journeys of formation and service,
May our minds ever be sharp, our hearts ever tender,
And our lives ever committed to your transforming grace.
For it is in you alone that we find the strength to bear witness
To the union of the divine and the human, the heavenly and the earthly.
To you be all glory, honour, and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**

College of the Transfiguration Ordinands' Retreat
01-04 August 2024





MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR - REV. CANON DR. PERCY CHINGANGA

Alleluia, Christ is Risen.
He is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

Welcome to all our readers.

I am grateful that the *Seminario Gazette* has been revived. Congratulations to all who have worked tirelessly to ensure this has been achieved.

College of the Transfiguration is a Community-in-Formation. All community members are valued for who they are and what they bring to the formation programme of the College. Thus, much is learned of each other, of our vocations, our backgrounds and our experiences of the formation journey through shared reflections and the practice of holy listening during our time together at the College.

It is with this understanding that the bulk of this volume of the gazette provides us with narratives and reflections from a selected few individuals of the College community of 2025 which inform us of who they are, what they have brought to the College and how they feel their participation in the shared life of the College has impacted them.

Some were visitors, nonetheless, we celebrate with them and are grateful for the invaluable contributions which they have made to the life and witness of the College.

Therefore, the content of this gazette provides us with snippets of what is fundamental to residential theological education, spiritual and ministerial formation. We pray, learn, work, eat and socialise in community. We are committed to embrace each other despite our diverse socio-cultural preferences, spiritualities, and vulnerabilities. In all our engagements and experiences, we find solace, encouragement and affirmation in the divine promises which are enshrined in Scripture of a Friend and Saviour who comes to us again and again in all circumstances, even behind locked doors, with the words, "*Peace be with you.*"

Happy reading, and be blessed.
Season of Easter-tide 2026



The Rector sharing peace during the 2026 Commissioning Service





INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY

Dr. Jonathan May has served as a Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the College of the Transfiguration since January 2003, completing 23 years of dedicated service. He completed his doctoral studies at Glasgow University and specializes in Biblical Studies, Hermeneutics, and the formation of seminarians. Dr. Jonathan is deeply committed to mentoring students, fostering critical thinking, and encouraging them to engage actively with Scripture rather than passively receive information. He serves on the editorial board of Ecclesia Africana, contributing to the development of scholarly work within the College and broader theological community. His vocational commitment is evident in his involvement in retreats, pedagogy, and integrating theological reflection with contemporary social issues. He's also a family-oriented individual, and emphasizes the importance of relationships, both within and beyond the academic setting. Currently, Dr. Jonathan is preparing for an upcoming sabbatical, during which he plans to rest, spend time with family, and pursue research and writing on topics such as creation, social reform, and theology in contemporary contexts.

Could you kindly tell us a bit about yourself, your family background, passions, and mainly what fled the passion to theological studies and lastly, your hobbies when you are engaged and not engaged with college life?

I come from Scotland, where I grew up in a small town called Denny, near Stirling and Falkirk—roughly halfway between Glasgow and Edinburgh, the latter being the capital city. My family consists of my mother, father, and sister.

From a young age, faith was central to my upbringing. My family attended the local Baptist Church, and I was also active in the Boys' Brigade, which focused on advancing Christ's Kingdom, as well as in Christian Endeavour and a Bible Club. These experiences shaped me deeply—whether through Sunday school exams, youth camps, or children's ministry, there was always an emphasis on learning, knowing, and living the Bible.

When I finished school, I wasn't entirely sure what I wanted to do. My choices ranged widely—from mechanical or civil engineering to psychology. Eventually, I enrolled at the University of Glasgow for psychology, but when it came time to register, I realised it wasn't the right fit. Fortunately, I had been admitted to the broader Faculty of Arts, which gave me freedom to choose.

In my first year, I picked subjects that interested me: moral philosophy, Scottish history, and a course called "Religion Ordinary." That course was like a ten-pence mix-up bag of sweets—it gave you a bit of everything: Old and New Testament studies, church history, philosophy of religion, systematic theology, and world religions.





INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY [CONTINUED]

It was this course that really sparked my passion for theology.

From there, I moved into the Faculty of Divinity, eventually specialising in New Testament studies for my honours degree, while also studying pastoral theology and church history. The Bible—especially the New Testament—became the core of my academic and vocational journey.

As for hobbies, they've changed over time. Walking has always been important to me—these days I especially enjoy long walks along the beach or in nature. I also love training and spending time with my dog, Themba, a flat-coated retriever who is full of character. Before COVID, going to the cinema was a regular joy of mine, though that has faded somewhat now. I still enjoy reading—mostly spy or crime thrillers.

Living close to Addo Elephant National Park, I also find great peace and joy in visiting the park. Watching elephants—whether they're calmly eating or mischievously chasing other animals—is a grounding and life-giving experience. Along with that, I've developed a love for photography, always trying to capture the beauty of wildlife and landscapes.

As for golf—though I don't play, I enjoy walking my dog on the course and spending time with friends who do. If you count crazy golf, then yes, I suppose I've dabbled!

In summary, faith and Christian community shaped my early years, an unexpected turn at university opened the way to theology, and today my life is marked by walking, nature, animals, reading, photography, and enjoying the simple gifts of life.

and today my life is marked by walking, nature, animals, reading, photography, and enjoying the simple gifts of life.

From your years of experience at college, what would you think it means to be a lecturer, particularly at the College of Transfiguration?

I have now been at the College of Transfiguration for over two decades—arriving on 4 January 2003, which means I have completed 22 years and am now in my 23rd. Over that time, I have come to see that being a lecturer here is about far more than standing in front of a class and imparting knowledge.

The classroom is, of course, central, but I see it as a place of formation rather than simply information. My task is not to spoon-feed students or confirm them in the theological stance they already hold, but to equip them with tools—methods, resources, and perspectives—that allow them to think critically, to ask good questions, and to engage meaningfully with diverse viewpoints. I want them to be able to explain not only what they believe, but also why, and to recognise how their views fit into a broader conversation of interpretation.

Equally important, life here is lived in community. Formation happens not only in the lecture room but in the dining hall, the chapel, Freedom Square, and the everyday rhythm of campus life. Being a lecturer means participating fully in that community, being open to learning from students as much as teaching them, and journeying together as disciples.



INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY [CONTINUED]

Greatest Joy

There have been many moments of joy over the years, but one that stands out most recently was leading a retreat. I had never done this before, and it was a challenge—an immersion rather than a one-day event. Yet I found that the same pedagogical skills I have honed at COTT translated well into that space, and it was deeply rewarding to see it received positively and to know it helped people.

What made it especially joyful was recognising so many people connected to COTT—former students from as far back as the early 2000s, those who had been in my classes or formation groups, and hearing their stories of ministry. To know that my teaching and our life together at the college had resourced them for parish ministry beyond the gates of COTT was profoundly affirming. That joy sits alongside memories of other community moments: outward bound days at Hobbiton with team-building and challenges, Holy Week retreats that centred on discipleship, and shared meals like the “potjie kos” gatherings. All of these reflect the joy of being part of a community shaped by faith and growth.

Greatest Struggle

The greatest struggle, I would say, is twofold. Firstly, the busyness. We are a limited staff, yet the workload remains heavy regardless of whether there are 30 or 60 students. It often feels like spinning plates—keeping many responsibilities in motion, always aware that something may fall if you cannot return to it in time.

Secondly, the emotional toll. Life at COTT is full of vitality, but it is also regularly marked by bereavement. Many of our students experience significant losses during their time here, sometimes multiple in quick succession. Even when the grief is not your own, the cumulative weight of being present with students in those moments can be draining. The challenge is to carry that compassion without becoming numb, to remain human and open-hearted while continuing to lead and support.

The College's Support for Staff and Seminarians

Over the 23 years I've been here, I would say the college has always strived to give its best in supporting both staff and seminarians. Of course, like any community, there are times when we could have done better, but I believe we consistently give 100% of what we are able to give at the time. Life at COTT has its share of struggles, whether emotional, personal, or academic, and as a community we try to walk with people through those realities with honesty and care.

Ecclesia Africana and Writing

With regard to the newly founded Ecclesia Africana journal, I serve as a member of the editorial board. My role involves administering the process—seeking and receiving submissions, ensuring blind peer reviews are completed on time, and liaising with the typesetter so that each annual issue can be released punctually. Though it is an online journal rather than a print one, the same academic rigour applies, and I find it rewarding to contribute to creating this platform for African theological scholarship.



INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY [CONTINUED]

As for my own writing: when I first arrived at COTT in 2003, my intention was either to publish my thesis as a book or to rework it into articles. But, as often happens here, I found myself immersed in community life beyond teaching, which meant those plans slipped away. Over the years, though, I have written when invited. I contributed a chapter to the Anglican Communion's Bible in the Life of the Church project and published an article in the *Journal of Anglican Studies*. In both cases, the commitment came because someone asked, and that created the discipline to carve out the time.

Would I like to write more? Absolutely. A commentary, however, is not something I've ever desired—it requires total immersion in a text, its historical and contemporary scholarship, and a command of vast bibliographies. My admiration goes to those who do that work, but my own writing interest is more in shorter pieces—articles or perhaps a small book—than in producing a commentary. I think part of this comes from how I balance my life: I don't work 24/7, even if some students think I do! So while writing is a desire, it competes with the call to live in community, teach, and serve.

Former Seminarians and other studies

One of the college's missions is to prepare clergy of quality and depth. In the area of biblical studies, I have seen many students discover a passion for Scripture and theology that carried them further. Not all have gone into biblical studies directly—sometimes funding dictates another path

—but many have pursued further studies at universities in South Africa and abroad.

It has been rewarding to hear, particularly from those who completed the four-year degree, how well-prepared they felt when entering postgraduate programmes. They could research, write, and engage critically, and sometimes their lecturers would even ask, "Where did you learn to do this?" That reflects the strength of the formation here. Even diploma students have managed to bridge into higher programmes, which is no small achievement.

So, while the fruit looks different in each case, I take joy in knowing that the biblical studies they encountered here did not leave them spoon-fed, but instead gave them the tools to think for themselves, to articulate their views clearly, and to grow in both scholarship and ministry.

What has made you stay and serve at the College for so many years? And have you ever considered seeking or finding a job elsewhere, noting your early ambitions and how you grew into your current role?

I think the key reason is vocation. For those of us who don't have a vocation to ordained ministry, there still has to be a sense of calling. I remember back in 2000, after marrying my wife, we moved to Norwich while I was finishing my doctoral studies. We attended the Anglican church down the road, and as part of their programme on exploring spiritual gifts, I sat down with the minister to discuss my results. He said to me, "If it walks like a duck, talks like a duck, and quacks like a duck — it's a duck." Everything pointed towards me being a teacher. The question was not if, but in what field.



INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY [CONTINUED]

That conviction — that my vocation is to teach — is what has kept me here for so long. Of course, there have been other motivations along the way: my wife's career in South Africa, life events, even the excitement of the World Cup. These helped root us here. But at the heart of it, I have stayed because I feel called to this ministry.

Have I ever considered doing something else? Yes, from time to time. There aren't many opportunities to do exactly what I do here in Makhanda, so naturally one wonders: could I retool, could I pursue another passion, could family circumstances take us elsewhere? Life happens, and those questions come up. But for now, I have no plans to leave.

With your years of service, do you see yourself here in the next couple of years?

Yes, I do — but life is unpredictable. Circumstances may change: family needs, opportunities elsewhere, or even practical reasons could draw me away. But as I sit here, I have no intention of going anywhere.

You often speak of your wife. Would you describe yourself as a family person?

Definitely. Our family is the two of us and our animals — Smurf the cat, and Themba the dog, who travels everywhere with me. My wife and I came to South Africa together, and her work as a veterinary surgeon is one reason we are based where we are.

We are also deeply connected to our families back home. We're fortunate that both our parents and siblings are still with us, and we look forward to seeing them soon. Technology makes this easier now —

when we first moved here, contact meant expensive phone calls. Now, we can see them regularly on a screen, which is a great blessing. Yes, I am a family person. That is central to who I am.

In a church that is becoming increasingly digital, especially after COVID, many people now prefer to study online or avoid physically engaging in community-based programs or church gatherings. How would you speak into that reality? And how can we, as seminarians, be prepared to deal with such challenges?

I think there's a place for different modes of learning and engagement. There is no one-size-fits-all. But as creatures made in the image of God, we are created for relationship — with God, with one another, with other creatures, and with creation itself. That means we must always find ways to relate.

Now, just because something is mediated through a digital platform doesn't mean it is not a real relationship. For those of us old enough to remember, we once used rotary dial phones. When we picked up the phone and spoke with someone on the other end, it was a genuine conversation. The same is true today: online conversations are real, provided we treat them as such.

The challenge comes with social media and our devices. These technologies are designed to distract us, not to promote deep commitment to relationships. For example, you may be engaged in a conversation on WhatsApp, but the moment another notification comes through, your attention is pulled away. This undermines presence.



INTERVIEW WITH DR JONATHAN MAY [CONTINUED]

So what do we do? We need to remind ourselves that, whatever the platform, we are engaging with another human being. Being human means being in a relationship. That requires empathy, attention, and thoughtfulness. Reread your messages before sending them. Think about whether they reflect Jesus' Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

If we can practice this kind of attentiveness in digital interactions, then we not only preserve the integrity of online relationships, but we also help encourage those who may have withdrawn from the physical community to rediscover the value of being together again in person. Because in the end, human beings long for genuine relationships.

Last Remarks to Seminarians:

My encouragement is threefold:

Be confident - Confidence transforms people. In chapel or formation groups, I've seen how growing in confidence leads to better reading, better preparation, and fuller participation. Don't be afraid of mistakes — move past them with grace.

Seek understanding - Theology is faith seeking understanding. Don't just accept what others say. Read widely, think critically, ask yourself why you agree or disagree. Is it simply because it feels familiar, or because you've examined the principles and evidence?

Serve others - Our world suffers from poor human interaction. Jesus' Golden Rule — "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" — should guide us. Like positive reinforcement in dog training, affirm the good in others first, then build on it. That way, we grow together into the body of Christ we are called to be.

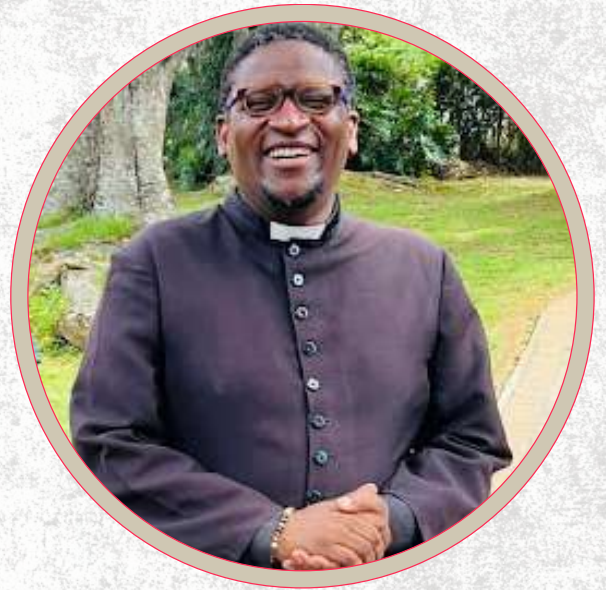


Dr Jonathan May pictured with his wife and their two beloved dogs.



INTERVIEW WITH REVD. SAMUEL MPOLE MASEMOLA

Revd. Mpole Masebola, originally from Limpopo, has lived in Johannesburg, Norway, and Australia. He is married with two children and comes from a close-knit family. Mentored by leaders such as Father Tapamola, he has made a significant impact as a lecturer at the College of the Transfiguration, inspiring students in liturgy, Anglican studies, and homiletics. His time at the College shaped his approach to formation, ministry, and mission. Had he not been called to the priesthood, he might have pursued medicine or publishing, but his vocation allows him to help others discover themselves as children of God. He encourages students to care for one another and believes alumni play a vital role as ambassadors, supporting the College's ongoing mission with generosity, collaboration, and vision.



Family background

I am originally from Limpopo, though I've lived in different places throughout my life — Johannesburg, Norway, back to Johannesburg, then here, and next to Australia. My mother is still alive, and I have three siblings who are also alive. I am married and live with two of my children, and I have other children from a previous marriage in Norway. So, we are a blended family. In terms of my ministry network, many of my colleagues in Anglican ministry are related in some way, including Father Thapelo, who is the chaplain at St. John's College and priest in charge at St. Mary's in Dobsonville.

What highlights come to mind from your time lecturing at the only Seminary for the training of Anglican clergy in Southern Africa?

There have been many highlights. I loved the openness and hunger of the students to learn and engage. As someone within Anglo-

Catholicism, I enjoyed the east-facing altar, a practice I first experienced in Lutheran churches in Norway.

I appreciated that students here embraced it and wanted to learn.

Working with my formation groups, both last year and this year, has been fantastic, and I feel some of them may become lifelong friends and future colleagues. I was inspired by the opportunity to shape future clergy — it's a rare and grand opportunity. I especially enjoyed teaching liturgy, Anglican studies, and homiletics, as I could see the immediate impact of my teaching in how students conducted themselves and preached. Pastoral lessons also taught me the importance of mindful presence, something that college life encourages in ways a parish sometimes cannot. One memorable occasion was this year's Maundy Thursday service, where I felt fully engaged in worship while presiding.



INTERVIEW WITH REVD. SAMUEL MPOLE MASEMOLA [CONTINUED]

How has your stay at the College of the Transfiguration (as a formator / lecturer) impacted or formed you?

My time at the College has shaped me profoundly. It allowed me to test some of my ideas about formation and ministry in a residential, almost monastic, community. I have learned new approaches to teaching, using learning management systems and other tools to enhance learning. I realized that the Church itself has largely forgotten how to teach foundational practices like the Lord's Prayer, and that formation involves rethinking teaching and discipleship.

My experience here has strengthened my confidence in practical tools for ministry and has reshaped how I will approach parish work and mission. It has allowed me to confirm some of my beliefs while adjusting others, giving me a more refined understanding of ministry and formation.

Had you not become a priest, what would you have been? And what does it mean to be a priest/pastor to you?

I started as a medical student for three years but knew it wasn't for me. I also worked in publishing for two years, which I enjoyed, but ultimately, I knew priesthood was my calling. Being a priest is not just a career; it is a privilege to experience oneself and others as children of God. It is both exciting and challenging, and it allows me to see spiritual growth in others while continually deepening my own faith.

No other profession I can imagine would provide the same level of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Last Remarks to Seminarians:

My advice is to look after one another. Institutions and communities only function meaningfully when we care for one another selflessly. Love and mutual support are essential in ministry and life.

Alumni have an important role as ambassadors, specialists, and supporters of the College. They can provide expertise, encouragement, and continuity, helping to sustain the College's mission while also benefiting from engagement with current students. Engagement should be mutual, not just what the College gets from alumni, but also what alumni gain from staying connected.



REVD. MPOLE MASEMOLA

My time at the College has shaped me profoundly... My experience here has strengthened my confidence in practical tools for ministry and has reshaped how I will approach parish work and mission.



Rev. Mpole pictured with his wife



REFLECTIONS | EVENSONG ECHOES

TOUSSAINT IGI LIMA MUKUMO, M.AFR.

My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration

When Saint Joseph's Theological Institute (SJTI) invited me to join the Exchange Program with the College of the Transfiguration (COTT) from 23 August to 6 September 2025 in Grahamstown /Makhanda, my heart was stirred by both excitement and uncertainty. For long, ecumenical dialogue had intrigued me, though I often wrestled with the question: Is ecumenism a futile adventure? At COTT, I experienced ecumenism as a shared pilgrimage of faith, where differences should not divide but invite deeper listening and mutual respect. This reflection on my time at COTT will briefly trace my background, recount my stay, share my view on theology, and offer a humble message to the COTT community in celebration of its Alumni Year.

There is a day inscribed not only in calendars but in God's providence: November 1, 1989. On the solemnity of All Saints, I was welcomed into the world, hence bearing the name Toussaint in French. I was born and grew up within Saint Hilary Parish of Mulambula at



“A DIVIDED CHURCH
HAS NO MESSAGE
FOR A DIVIDED
WORLD

Br. Toussaint Igilima

Mungombe, Diocese of Uvira, South Kivu province, DR Congo, where my parents' fervent Catholic faith became the soil of my soul. In 2010, the road carried me from my village to Bukavu, the capital of my province. There, I completed high school, then studied English at Bukavu Teacher Training College – ISP/Bukavu – earning a B.A. in English and African Culture (2014) and an M.A. in English Language Teaching (2016).

In Bukavu, the Spirit blew anew, drawing me toward the Missionaries of Africa in 2017. The Society of Missionaries of Africa is a Society of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right, a missionary institute of Priests and Brothers living in an international and intercultural community, devoted to proclaiming the Gospel across Africa and beyond. My vocation, however, was born when I was as young as ten. During the Second Congo War (1998-2003), my family and entire village hid for six months in the bush. I witnessed people die longing for Confession and Eucharist, yet no priest was near.

Thus, my vocation sprang from the ashes of war and is rooted in the Eucharistic and penitential thirst of the abandoned. It is a call engraved into the broken history of my country. By grace, I professed my Perpetual Oath on November 21, 2025, and was ordained deacon the next day in Merrivale, South Africa. During my spare time, I find rest in poetry and in the quiet strategy of draughts/checkers.



REFLECTIONS | EVENSONG ECHOES [CONTINUED] TOUSSAINT IGI LIMA MUKUMO, M.AFR. *My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration*

Alongside Brother Sphiwe Mjuqu OP and Sister Assumpta Mosia Gladys OP, I enjoyed an exceptional ecumenical encounter with our Anglican seminarians and priests at the College of the Transfiguration. A Swahili proverb says, *Siku njema huonekana alfajiri* – a good day is seen at dawn. From the very first moment, we were welcomed with songs of joy and Christ-filled smiles. For the first time in my life, I lived together with my Anglican brothers and sisters – praying, learning, eating, laughing and sharing life in a cordial atmosphere of love and mutual respect. While we could look at each other with a smile and wonder during the lectures on the Reformation in the 16th century, history challenged us to embrace a kenotic spirit of tolerance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

What struck me most was COTT’s liturgical atmosphere: reverent, vibrant, and Spirit-filled. The Eucharistic service carried a devotion that recalled the words of Saint Pope John Paul II, that every authentic prayer is the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet, it was the Evensong that left the deepest imprint on my soul. Its echoes remain alive within me, reminding me that the liturgical beauty of diverse Christian traditions is not a barrier but a treasure for mutual enrichment and nourishment as pilgrims of hope.

Yet, it was the Evensong that left the deepest imprint on my soul. Its echoes remain alive within me, reminding me that the liturgical beauty of diverse Christian traditions is not a barrier but a treasure for mutual enrichment and nourishment as pilgrims of hope.

In the West’s drift toward radical secularism, theology is not merely optional but essential. Rooted in its etymology as discourse about God, theology embodies Anselm’s vision of *fides quaerens intellectum* – faith seeking understanding. Sound theology purifies unchecked belief, while genuine faith shields us from ungodly lifestyles. Rowan Williams reminds us that theology is the discipline of learning to see truthfully, where belief shapes practice and practice mirrors belief. To see truthfully is to live faithfully. Belief without understanding, or understanding without belief, is like a bird with one wing. Therefore, orthodoxy must walk with orthopraxis.

What struck me most was COTT’s liturgical atmosphere: reverent, vibrant, and Spirit-filled. The Eucharistic service carried a devotion that recalled the words of Saint Pope John Paul II, that every authentic prayer is the work of the Holy Spirit.

BR. TOUSSAINT IGI LIMA



Br. Toussaint Igi Lima pictured with his fellow brother and sister in the chapel



REFLECTIONS | EVENSONG ECHOES [CONTINUED] TOUSSAINT IGIKIMA MUKUMO, M.AFR. *My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration*

If theology safeguards truth in the West, in Africa it must confront lived realities. In fact, African religiosity thrives amid acute poverty and violence, and theology matters only when it listens to Africans' voices and responds to their struggles. Salvation is not and should not be merely about heaven after death but about transforming daily existence. As N.T. Wright insists, salvation concerns whole human beings, the present as much as the future, and what God accomplishes through us, not only for us.

This contextual soteriology sheds light on what it means to be saved in Africa. In his book, *My Faith as an African*, Jean-Marc Ela identifies oppressive regimes, corruption, inequality, civil wars, and instability as agonizing realities in Africa. Other pressing African issues that sound theology should address include unemployment, displacement, debt, arms trade, tribalism, malnutrition, ecological crises, neo-colonial exploitation, the lingering effects of colonialism, cultural imperialism, and gender-based violence (Ecclesia in Africa no. 40 ff). Misheck Mbevi further highlights witchcraft and dark forces that hold many Africans captive. Professor Kā Mana frames these challenges as African paradoxes: abundant theory but little transformative action; immense resources yet persistent poverty; charismatic leaders yet stagnant politics; fervent religiosity yet rampant corruption and violence.

Today, our human relations are scarred by tribalism, sectarianism, "countryism," and other divisive tendencies that cry out for healing. This healing can only be realized if we commit ourselves to intercultural living and prophetic ecumenical witness. As COTT celebrates its Alumni Year, I kindly invite everyone to be truly transfigured in Christ and radiate a love that excludes no one. One concrete way to radiate such love is to speak well of the other in our daily conversations. For me, the greatest ecclesial tragedy is not past crusades or Reformation violence, but witnessing ministers who preach the Gospel in the morning and spend the rest of the day gossiping about fellow laborers in the Lord's vineyard.

I have come to see that ecumenism is less about solving doctrinal puzzles than about daring to live as kinfolk in Christ. My time at COTT revealed that the Church's divisions, though real, are not final; they are invitations to deeper humility, forgiveness, and love. I remain convinced that every step toward one another is already a step toward God, and every step away from each other is a step away from God.

For me, the greatest ecclesial tragedy is not past crusades or Reformation violence, but witnessing ministers who preach the Gospel in the morning and spend the rest of the day gossiping about fellow laborers in the Lord's vineyard.

Br.
Toussaint
Igilima
Mukumo,
M. Afr.



REFLECTIONS SR ASSUMPTA NTHATI MOSIA OP *My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration*

I am Sr Assumpta Nthati Mosia, was born in Ladysmith, I come from a family of five, I have two siblings and I am the last born, both my parents are still alive. My desire for religious life grew from a deep search for purpose and truth, I felt drawn to a life of simplicity, prayer, and service to others. Seeing the joy and dedication of those who were already in this life inspired me deeply. I longed to belong to a community that lives for God and supports one another.

The student exchange program between our Institute, SJTI, and the College of the Transfiguration has proven to be a valuable academic and cultural experience.

To provide an overview of my experience I will mention the classes attended, the program structure at the host college, and the interaction with students.



The classes at COTT were well-structured and engaging. Lectures combined theoretical learning with practical application, which encouraged critical thinking and active participation. Our host institution placed a stronger emphasis on interactive teaching methods such as formation groups, presentations, and pastoral placement. The professors were approachable and encouraged dialogue, which made the learning environment highly inclusive.

One of the notable aspects was the integration of pastoral placement and formation groups. This intertwined with our religious life and provided a more traditional approach and useful insights into new ways of learning and living. Overall, the classes contributed positively to both academic growth and personal development.

I strongly recommend that this programme continues. It offers students an invaluable opportunity to broaden their educational and cultural horizons

Sr Nthati Mosia



Sr Assumpta pictured with fellow brothers and sisters from COTT at Freedom-Square



REFLECTIONS [CONTINUED] SR ASSUMPTA NTHATI MOSIA OP *My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration*

The exchange programme was well-organized, with a clear timetable that balanced academic work with extracurricular activities. Orientation sessions helped us to adjust quickly, while mentorship arrangements paired us with local students to support our integration.

The programme also offered seminars on formation and cultural adaptation, which broadened our understanding of other denominational perspectives.

In addition, the host college encouraged participation in serving and reading, making the programme holistic. This structure fostered a sense of belonging and allowed us to gain a deeper appreciation of student life at the institution.

The interaction with both faculty and fellow students was one of the highlights of the programme. Staff members were open, supportive, and always willing to provide guidance. Pastoral placement with local students created opportunities for cultural exchange, teamwork, and the sharing of different perspectives.

The student body was welcoming and inclusive, which eased the adjustment process and allowed friendships to be built quickly. These interactions not only improved communication and collaboration skills but also exposed participants to diverse ways of thinking. They contributed significantly to the overall success of the programme.

Some recommendations based on the academic quality, programme organization, and positive interpersonal interactions experienced during the exchange, I strongly recommend that this programme continues. It offers students an invaluable opportunity to broaden their educational and cultural horizons, develop global networks, and enhance both personal and professional growth. Expanding the programme to include more participants or extending its duration could further maximize its benefits.

I will focus on Theological Studies because that is the only field of study that I am familiar with. I never thought of doing Theology, it came to me as an obedience so as a religious woman who has vowed obedience I obeyed and went for it.

I approached theological studies not as a mere academic exercise, but as a religious woman I approached it as a vocation within a vocation, a way of loving God, serving the Church, and responding to the signs of the times with depth and faithfulness. From my perspective, theology is not optional for consecrated life today; it is essential for mission, discernment, and credible witness.

May this Alumni Year strengthen the bonds between past and present members of the College and renew the spirit of unity, service, and faith that defines this community.

Sr Nthati Mosia



REFLECTIONS [CONTINUED] SR ASSUMPTA NTHATI MOSIA OP

My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration

For a religious theology begins in prayer and contemplation. Study is not separate from spirituality and as a Dominican, study is one of our four pillars which are Prayer, Community, Study and Mission. Studying is a way of seeking to understand the God whom we have consecrated our lives to, it is a way of nourishing our vows with insight and conviction, allowing faith to move from devotion to informed commitment. Theology is studied not to “know about God” but to know God more deeply.

As St. Anselm says, *fides quaerens intellectum*, faith seeking understanding.

Today, the Church is deeply involved in, Catechesis, Pastoral ministry, Education, Social justice, Spiritual accompaniment, Formation of young people and candidates. Without solid theological grounding, these ministries risk becoming moral advice instead of Gospel proclamation, social work without spiritual depth, and tradition without understanding.

Theology enables us to teach, guide, and evangelize with clarity and authority.



Sr Assumpta pictured with the rector at the dining hall during breakfast

In many contexts, people ask hard questions about suffering, God’s justice, the role of women, the relevance of the Church, etc. A theologically formed Christian, religious man or woman can engage these questions meaningfully, making theology a tool for evangelization.

For any Christian, religious man and religious woman today, theological studies are, a path to deeper communion with God, more effective service to the Church, intelligent engagement with the modern world, and faithful living of her consecration. Theology is not merely studied to earn degrees, but it is studied to become a better disciple, a wiser minister, a credible witness, and a reflective servant of the People of God. In the present life of the Church, theological study is not a luxury, it is a necessity for mission, identity - our Christian identity to be precise, and faithful witness.



Sr Assumpta pictured with her fellow brothers at the dining hall



REFLECTIONS [CONTINUED] SR ASSUMPTA NTHATI MOSIA OP *My Experience at the College of the Transfiguration*

Dear Members of the College of Transfiguration Community.

Warm greetings to you all.

Although I am no longer physically present with you, my heart remains deeply connected to this beloved College that in a very short time of only two weeks has shaped, formed, and inspired me in so many ways. The memories, friendships, lessons, and shared moments of faith and growth continue to live within me.

I wish to encourage you all, especially the current staff and students, and those who would be part of the College in the future, to cherish the moment of being in the College, to always keep the spirit of unity, service, and faith that defines the community. And lastly, may the celebration of Alumni be a beautiful reminder that a College is not only made of buildings and classrooms, but rather it is made up of people, stories, and a shared journey, which me and my fellow SJTI brothers have been fortunate to be a part of. I am very pleased that I remain part of the living story of the COTT. What I received at COTT will always bear fruit wherever life takes me. It was only two weeks but believe me when I say there is a lot that I have gained.

May this Alumni Year strengthen the bonds between past and present members of the college and renew the spirit of unity, service, and faith that defines this community.

May the Pastoral Festival be a time of joy, gratitude, reflection, and renewed commitment to the values the college stands for. Be assured of my prayers and heartfelt support as you celebrate.

**With gratitude and fond memories,
Sr Nthati Mosia OP**





2025 LEAVERS' DINNER REFLECTIONS

NONTOKOZO MVUNELO

It is a profound privilege to offer a reflection on the Leavers' Dinner held on 14 November 2025 of the College of Transfiguration. The evening was marked by unity, joy, and deep spiritual significance. It was not merely a farewell gathering, but a sacred occasion of celebration, commissioning, and fellowship.

We were especially honoured by the presence of the Rector alongside the seminarians, a moment that evoked the scriptural image of Christ in table fellowship with His disciples: "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). In that same spirit, we shared food and drink with gratitude and mutual care, embodying the unity that binds us as one body in Christ. Though we may be separated by distance, this communion endures, for we partake of the one bread and share in the one cup.

The guest speaker, Archbishop Dr N. Ngesi, delivered a message marked by prophetic urgency. He reminded us that in standing with and defending the marginalized, we ourselves become prophetic witnesses in the world. His words carried both the weight of truth and the pastoral authority of one who calls the faithful to courage, justice, and compassion.

Revd. Gina's address to the leavers was equally compelling. She emphasized that their formation at the College has not only informed and transformed them, but has also prepared them for a divinely entrusted vocation.

They are called by name and sent forth as servants of the Gospel, to proclaim the good news and to embody the love of Christ in a world yearning for hope.

The atmosphere of the evening was joyful, yet gently imbued with the poignancy of farewell. We celebrated achievements, shared laughter, and affirmed the bonds of our common life. It was a powerful reminder that even as we part ways, we remain united—one in spirit, one in mission, and one in Christ.

In reflecting on that evening, it becomes evident that the Leavers' Dinner was not simply an event, but a living testimony to what it means to be the Body of Christ. It reaffirmed that our unity is not confined by time or place, but is rooted in the eternal covenant we share. As we go forth into the world, may we carry with us the joy of that night, the strength of our calling, and the enduring bond of our fellowship.

*"For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread"
(1 Corinthians 10:17).*



Pictures captured at the 2025 leaver's dinner



2025 LEAVERS' DINNER REFLECTIONS [CONTINUED]

NTSIELO MALEFETSANE

This was my first Leavers' Dinner at COTT, and therefore my reflections are based solely on the 2025 event rather than on any comparison with previous years.

Overall, the preparation for the evening was commendable. Key logistical aspects, such as the timely distribution of meal menus, allowed attendees to make their selections in advance. Transportation to the venue was well coordinated, and the standard of dress across attendees reflected the formality and significance of the occasion.

A light-hearted highlight for me was seeing Jason with a clean-shaven beard for the first time, it was a refreshing change. The program itself was well executed. The MCs facilitated the evening effectively, and most speakers contributed meaningfully. The guest speaker, Archbishop Dr N. Ngesi, delivered an engaging and memorable address that added significant value to the event.

Overall, the event was well organised and enjoyable. Looking ahead, two key areas for improvement would be beneficial. Firstly, early and intentional fundraising could help ensure that all students are able to attend the Leavers' Dinner. Secondly, continued attention to planning and coordination will further enhance the overall experience of such an event.



Pictures captured at the 2025 leaver's dinner (continued)



LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS



KAONE GAETSEWE

Dip 1 | Diocese of Kimberley & Kuruman

EDITOR, LAY-OUT & DESIGN



SINOKUHLE RUNGQU

BTh 3 | Diocese of George

EDITOR, LAY-OUT & DESIGN



MS VERONICA MOTLOGELOA

PA to the Bishop | Diocese of Kimberley & Kuruman

PROOFREADER



COLLEGE OF TRANSFIGURATION, NPC

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@collegeoftransfiguration



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