



DIOCESE OF FALSE BAY
Bishop's Forum: Lay Ministers

Service of Comfort
Workshop 2019



Service of Comfort
Inkonzo Yentuthuzelo
Diens van troos



Questions for discussion

- What do you believe about death?
- What is the role of a Lay minister when death has occurred?
- What is your experience of Services of Comfort? (Prayer meetings/Imithandazo/ umlindo)
- What is the purpose of a Service of Comfort?



Introductory remarks

- Death is universal but how we respond to death is Cultural
- How we respond to death is always influenced by what we believe about death
- Its very important for us to grapple and seek to understand what do we as Anglicans believe about death
- In the English/Afrikaans speaking congregations there is usually one Service of comfort
- In the Xhosa speaking congregations there are three different types of services of Comfort
(Acknowledgement of death on the day of the passing, Prayer meeting on a daily basis until the funeral and Receiving of the body at the home on the day of funeral)



How do Anglicans view death

- Death is a necessary journey towards fullness of eternal life with the risen Christ
- No guarantee of salvation is provided by a belief in a persons virtue or claims of good life by the deceased
- Acceptance by God is as a result of faith in Jesus Christ not rewards of human righteousness
- We believe and look forward to the resurrection of the dead
- We believe in the life of the world to come (Nicene Creed)



What is the nature of a SoC

- Ecumenical
 - People of other faiths)
 - Non- believer
- House Worship (Space)
- Evening during the week
- Cultural



What are the implications for?

- Time
- Space
- Sensitivity (Culture)
- Inclusivity/ Welcoming
- Control
- Anglican Ethos



What are we doing at the SoC

- Ministry of presence
- Commending the bereaved into God's mercy and protection
- Bringing Comfort
 - Singing
 - Words
 - Word of God
 - Prayers



Key elements of Anglican worship

- Call to worship/Preparation/Introduction/Greeting
- Prayer
- Bible readings
- Music
- a homily
- Symbolic (Candles, Cross, Crucifix etc)

Anglican worship is intended to revere, honour and worship God and provide a spiritual encounter for the believer



Structure of the Service of Comfort

(This service is done as a receiving of the body service in the Xhosa congregations)

- Call to worship/ Preparation (Sentences)
- Psalm 42: 1-7
- Scripture reading/s
- Tributes
- Homily
- Prayers APB 565
- Concluding Prayers APB 532



Structure of the Service of Comfort

(This service is done as the daily service till the funeral in the Xhosa congregations)

- Call to worship/ Preparation (Sentences)
- Greeting and Kyrie
- Psalm 16 or Psalm 34 (APB 555)
- Scripture reading/s
- Tributes or Short Reflections
- Prayers APB 565
- Concluding Prayers APB 556-557



INKONZO YOKWAMKELA UMPHANGA

The service of comfort used to acknowledge death

1. ICULO
2. UMTHANDAZO
3. READ PRAYER BOOK p518 - 522
4. ISIFUNDO
5. INTSUMAYELO
6. IZAZISO
7. READ PRAYER BOOK (p533(6), 538-540
8. UBABALO



INKONZO WOMTHANDAZO WEVEKI

Prayer service conducted daily at the home

1. ICULO
2. ISIKHOKELO SENKONZO (p554-555)
3. ICULO
4. ISIFUNDO
5. INTSHUMAYELO
6. UMTHANDAZO WENTLOKO
7. IZAZISO
8. IMITHANDAZO YOKUQUKUMBELA (p556)
9. UBABALO



INKONZO YOKWAMKELA UMZIMBA NGEMINI YOMNCWABO

Service of comfort to receive the body at the home

1. ICULO
2. UMTHANDAZO
3. ISITHETHI SEKHAYA
4. READ PRAYER BOOK p531- 532(6)
5. ICULO
6. ISIFUMDO
7. ABONWE
8. INTSHUMAYELO EMFUTSHANE
9. UCOCEKA



Elements of the Service of Comfort

- Table (Point of focus)
- Candle
- Cross
- Prayer and Bible
- Cassock and Surplice (Medal)
- Preparation (Order of service)
- Booklet with hymns



What to look out for

- Who do you ask to pray
- Who do you allow to speak
- Setting the rules in the begging for what you will do when a person goes over their time allocation
- What gesture will you do to gently tell a person they are over their time
- Are there any close family members (Spouse or child) that would like to speak at the Service of comfort and to schedule them to speak at the end and to make special consideration for him/her
- What to do if there are no people willing to speak and do tributes (What to do to fill the space)



Funeral and Funerals services

- Funeral services are part of the continuing celebration of the Paschal mystery of Christ
- There is proper joy about the service, solemnity and the natural human sadness at parting from one who is loved
- Sobering reminder that death is inescapable for anyone of us
- Everyone is commended to God's mercy
- We pray for him or her to be granted the forgiveness which Jesus Christ came to bring



What are we doing at a funeral

- Commending the person to God's care
- Commending the bereaved people to the care of a loving Father
- We respond to the need of the bereaved: their need is for strength and solace in accepting their loss
- We are not just paying last respects or saying goodbye
- But, we are giving the person back to God with thanksgiving and confidence in God's
- We proclaim the resurrection and assurance of life in Jesus Christ



Preaching at the Service of Comfort

- ❖ Choice of scripture
- ❖ Length of the homily
- ❖ Speak boldly about what you know and carefully about what you don't.
- ❖ Acknowledge the need to grieve
- ❖ Make the hope of the gospel clearly known



What should the Homily focus on?

- Love of God
- Reality of death
- Need to grieve and mourn
- Acknowledgement of pain and loss
- Hope of the resurrection
- Eternal life



How to use appropriate Scripture Texts to fit the occasion

- Accident
- Child or Younger person
- Unusual circumstances of death (More than one person, body not found etc)
- Older person who died peacefully
- Person who is not known by the Church
- When body will be repatriated to Eastern Cape

Thank You