

Bredasdorp Plunge 2022

The Ordinands of the Diocese went on a plunge with Bishop Margaret Vertue, Bishop of False Bay, from 11-15 April 2022 to the parish of All Saints, Bredasdorp. The Ordinands were hosted by families throughout the parish in the towns of Bredasdorp, Napier, Struisbaai, Arniston and Klipdale.

The plunge was a very enriching experience for the ordinands and have touched them deeply. They were taken out of their comfort zone and placed in a community which is not familiar to them. For most of the ordinands the rural experience and visit to the most southern tip of Africa have been a first.

Everyday was started with morning prayer at the respective chapelries throughout this vast parish and followed up with house visits to the elderly and the sick. In the evenings the ordinands form part of the Holy Week services which focus on the book of Henry Nouwen, With burning Hearts, A Meditation on the Eucharistic Life.

Throughout our visits in the community an increase in crime in the area have been mentioned as a result of youth unemployment, the scourge of drugs and teenage pregnancies in the community was also evident. We could notice children of school-going age roaming around in the streets during school hours. This points to a high drop-out rate among school children which is attributed to the rotational time-table which was introduced during Covid-19.

One of the many things which stand out for the ordinands was the need to be open and to listen. Many a helpful moment is created by that. The need to listen to the joys and challenges of others is a sacred gift which should be handled with the utmost care. As much as we were prepared for the week, the story of Jesus being present in all situations, inviting the stranger and entering into fellowship with us had so much more meaning after sharing those moments and messages.

The community of Bredasdorp faces various challenges most notably the recent xenophobic attacks where more than 1000 Zimbabweans was left homeless. Under the leadership and guidance of Reverend Canon Francois Lewis the church played an integral part in resolving the disputes at hand. The spirit of ubuntu is truly alive in the church community, the way they responded to those in need was evident of the love they have for their neighbour. Despite all their daily challenges, it remains a vibrant community full of love and care for one another. We left the community of Bredasdorp and its surrounds with a true sense of community and servanthood.

We are truly grateful and thankful for our host the Reverend Canon Francois Lewis, the rector of the Parish of Bredasdorp for taking us on a journey of discovery in our spiritual lives. To allow us to be ourselves and to experience a new sense of vocation at the most southern point in Africa. The opportunity to learn, to grow, to develop but most importantly to further discern God's calling on our lives.

Without the vision, guidance and leadership of our beloved Bishop Margaret this plunge would not have been possible. To take us as ordinands out of our comfort zone and place us in a situation where we are not familiar or comfort with was a truly enriching experience. This experience has given us insight into ministry in a rural context which is so much different as to what most of us is used to in our urban settings.

It was not all work and no play, we had the opportunity to visit Overberg Agri in Klipdale, Kapula Candles, the Shipwreck Museum and the most Southern Point in Africa where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet. For most of us it was a first where we could experience the serene beauty and splendour of what this area has to offer.

In conclusion, Bishop fondly recalled the story of retired Bishop Garth Counsell as written in the Cape Argus upon his retirement whilst serving in the Parish of All Saints, Bredasdorp. He used to have a small bakkie which became a mobile chapel, he needed to travel the lonely and extensive length and breadth of this rural parish whilst doing pastoral care on the side of a dirt road inside

his bakkie. It was in his small Datsun bakkie where he prepared couples for the holy matrimony and conduct baptism classes.

Bishop encouraged the Ordinands remarked that she "... prays that all of us will found our Datsun bakkie, where that Datsun bakkie will serve the same purpose as the best of cathedrals, where a Datsun bakkie becomes a sanctuary where the forgotten ones are welcomed as the treasures of God. Its my prayer that the ordinands have found their Datsun bakkie in the Parish of Bredasdorp."



Southern-most tip of Africa L'Aghulhas



Good Friday, St Andrew, Arniston



St Saviour, Napier



Holy Spirit, Bredasdorp



Klipdale



Klipdale



All Saints, Bredasdorp