



April 2022

Dear prayer partners,

March has been a busy month. We have had birthday celebrations, a wedding, day retreats and more this month. We've also had some other visitors at the office as can be seen from the accompanying pictures.

Trees have been a topic for a while here at Volmoed, with the gum trees around the office standing as sentinels without their branches waiting to be taken down. Then we had a pine tree come down of its own accord without damaging anything other than some branches of a nearby plane tree. One of our visitors was instrumental in getting the gum trees down when he gave us the contact details of Eduard Conradie. He arrived with his team and a portable saw mill, so he didn't only take down the gums but also started planking them. As the pine came down just before they arrived he was able to help us clear away the pine as well.



Spotted Skaapsteker

On a slightly different 'tree' note—the labyrinth, which is called 'The Tree of Life', and has been on the cards for a while is also taking shape. The stones have been laid out and some of us have already walked it. Even in its unfinished state there is a meaningfulness as you walk it.



Last year we congratulated Bernhard and Jane on the birth of their grandchild Ella May and Leana on the birth of her son Noah. Here they are celebrating their first birthdays.



### Prayer and Praise

- We are thankful that Anna's operation and recuperation went off well and that she is back at work.
- That the gum trees came down with minimal damage to property.
- Pray for John and Isobel as they fly to England on the 6th April. They will meet up with John's sister Rozelle and visit Jeanelle and Debbie.
- Pray for Peterus, Yvette and Zoe as they go to Tygerberg on the 6th for Zoe to have a check up.
- Keep our bookkeeper Karen and her family in your prayers as her father isn't well.

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Warm greetings! The highlight this month was the arrival of Mona Nerea Okello, alumna of VYLTP 2019 program, as our first VYLTP volunteer, until the beginning of May. It has been a joy to welcome her into my home and share beautiful space in my lovely home. Mona works from the



VYLTP container office, and has busily collated and integrated databases from our various in person and online courses, and worked on PR/social media to recruit and organize for our next Taizé Youth Day this weekend. Her beautiful spirit and energy is a gift to all of us. She has taken a stint at milking the cows and enjoys the beauty and peace of Volmoed.

moed.

The visit of Fr Michael Lapsley and Ms Fatima Swartz from the Institute for Healing Memories was another highlight. Our whole community gathered to meet them and watch the video about the work of the Institute. We had a taste of what a Healing of Memories workshop is about, as people shared thoughts and questions from the video, and were answered by Michael and Fatima. We hope to continue with the full workshop. Please pray for us as we work out the practical and logistical details to do this.

On a personal note, my beloved spiritual director of many years, Sagrario Nuñez, passed away from metastatic bone cancer just a few weeks after she was diagnosed. This is a big loss for me, as she has been a rock of spiritual support all these years. I am grateful for my last retreat with her in December, and now pray to find a new person to accompany me in my spiritual journey.

As Lent continues against the backdrop of war and terror in Ukraine, I pray this prayer from the Corrymeela Community in Belfast, Northern Ireland, :

It is with deep sadness that we pray for peace and for the people of Ukraine.

God who sees the weakness in acts of naked aggression;  
God who feels the fear in moments of acute helplessness:  
cure this warring madness, and shield all who fall in harm's way.

Leach the poison from the mind that thinks strength is shown in a bullying force.

And may an equal strength in solidarity give resolve to those whose aim is to protect, and respect, not just the ones we call our own,

but all with whom we can share a better, more peaceful world.

Amen.

*Wilma*

Love,

## Wedding weekend in The Hemel -en -Aarde

Very pleasant , clean and lovely stay with very friendly people in charge . We loved the outside braai area and the walks to the waterfall and cross . Simple and comfortable . Best shower ever !! Felt very safe too



## PRIORY NEWS



Br Luc had not been to Cape Town before, and so was happy to be able to spend

some time there before returning to Holy Cross Monastery in the US after his three months in SA. This included a visit to the Tutu Centre. Br Daniel was away for a week, during which time we appreciated the availability and willingness of other priests at Volmoed to celebrate at some Eucharists. It is good to be part of a larger community.

At the beginning of Lent, Rev Wilma shared in leading our Ash Wednesday observance, which had an added poignancy this year, with the presence of delegates from both the Dutch Reformed and Uniting Reformed churches. Volmoed continues to be a place for healing and reconciliation.

We have enjoyed a week's visit from Edwin, a young man from Worcester, who is interested in joining the monastic community. It was good to spend time getting to know him better as he joined in our rhythm of prayer and community life.

The Superior and Council of the Order of the Holy Cross have agreed for Br Daniel to step down from his position as Prior of St Benedict's, and for Br Roger to take on that role. This will happen at the Order's annual Chapter meeting in the US in early June. Br Daniel will then take a well-earned six-month sabbatical, after ten years of leading the monastic community through several challenging transitions.



### Holy Week Schedule

#### **Palm Sunday 10 April**

09:00 Liturgy of Palms then Eucharist

#### **Maundy Thursday 14 April**

19:00 Liturgy and Eucharist

#### **Good Friday 15 April**

12:00 Liturgy of the Passion

#### **Easter Sunday 17 April**

06:00 Paschal Vigil followed immediately by Eucharist of the Resurrection

### April visitors

There are a number of pilgrims doing the Pilgrimage of Hope, who will be staying on Volmoed.

The Chapel will be used over the Easter Weekend for a wedding. Some of the guests will be staying on Volmoed.

29 April—1 May Karen Nebe will be hosting a course

*Esther*