

## **THE ANGLICAN PARISH OF GERMISTON.**

### **Outreach work in particular to the informal settlement of Dukathole, extensions 4, 5 (Good Hope) and 9, part of the parish area.**

Dukathole, situated in the industrial heart of Germiston is a severely impoverished area, with an estimated 20,000-30,000 people living in a 1.5 kilometre area. Surrounded by factories, whose effluents impact negatively on the environment, the majorities of people live in shacks without proper water, electricity and sanitation facilities and yet are situated in close proximity to the city centre.

The majority of the population is made up of women and children living in abject poverty, many brought from the rural areas to live close to their breadwinners working on the goldmines and in the industrial heartland, of which Germiston is central. The unemployment rate is estimated to be above 80% and physical abuse, prostitution, selling of liquor and crime is high.

*(An informal settlement is a collection of informal shacks & tin houses which has sprung up when people move into an area and simply erect some kind of shelter as they cannot afford proper housing. In our area, many such settlements exist and are now 'recognised' as being there by the local councils who provide taps, few stone toilets and not much else. As the years have passed some infrastructure like a mobile clinic and school have been allowed to be established, mainly as non fixture buildings. This area has still not been 'proclaimed' a full township)*

The Anglican parish in Germiston has in the past 12 years provided soup, bread, fruit and food parcels to those in need, especially the frail housebound, the aged and those who are ill and dying, working together with the Home Based Care, Bambanani. This is a 'soup outreach' with a difference. We have a team of parishioners who walk weekly leaving food for a few days and assisting with other needs, such as the supply of wheelchairs, walkers, clothing and other material goods. Assistance is given in obtaining identity documents for grants –especially among the grandmothers looking after orphans and child headed households through the assistance of the parishes Child Advocates.

The team of parishioners who walk what has become known as the 'soup run' are providing a valuable ministry in Dukathole, both in action and word; 30 parishioners now make 10 litres of soup on a roster basis; their commitment is unfailing and we have not missed a week in the years of working in the area. *Currently we are feeding 101 patients a week.*

Some members of other denominations, youth groups and some scholars from private schools doing community service join in helping with service from time to time.

Bambanani Home Based Care (HBC) has 4 caregivers under the supervision of Nomsa Sekwari, who receive a small stipend from the Parish at present until we find another sponsor. These faithful women often assist the community without any incentive. This project cares for approximately 174 patients, although this number fluctuates monthly, due to the high death and infection rate. The vast majority of the patients are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, but there are patients who have had strokes and other debilitating conditions and are also cared for at home.

### **Bambanani Little Angels Day Care Centre**

A day-care centre, caring for children of ill patients and HIV/AIDS orphans whose mothers have died in the care of the Home Based Care, became a reality in August 2007. This day-care centre is situated on the same ground, which is large enough to house both the Home Based Care container and the Day Care.

28 orphans attend the crèche on a full time basis and we have watched these little ones blossom with love and care under their 2 wonderful teachers, 1 of whom has been trained in Early Childhood Development.

***This project has been handed over to the Community of Dukathole from January 2013 as an ongoing completely equipped project under the direction of the Ward area Councillor. However donations of toys, food and equipment will still be accepted & handed over for the Parish is still actively involved in the crèche.***

### **SUPPORT- A- CHILD project in the Ekurhuleni Primary School .**

This project was initiated in 2004 by the Anglican Parish of Germiston, when it became apparent that the number of orphaned and vulnerable children in the Dukathole area was increasing at a rapid rate and the 'support a child' project has grown from strength to strength from that date.

Together with the teachers from the Ekurhuleni (Dukatole) Primary School, and the Child Advocates, we have identified orphans and vulnerable children who needed assistance with food since 2004, and from feeding 34 orphans in the first year, over 360 orphans and vulnerable children were identified in 2011, sponsorship for 250 children was secured for 2013 & we currently in 2015 have sponsorship for 185 children. The economic climate which has been difficult across our area has also affected the number of persons sponsoring children.

*Therefore our major need is to secure sponsors to adopt the more than 50 children who still need to come onto the feeding scheme, as the number of orphans is ever increasing.*

The company which specializes in producing the most cost effective food, rich in all the nutrients required to feed those facing starvation, has for the past 4 years kept the price of the packs pegged at R100.00 per month for which we are extremely grateful. This R100.00 continues to provide two meals and a nutritional protein milkshake every day. The Head mistress and teachers have reported that the children supported are noticeably improved in their school work and general behaviour.

The school is a Government school and has 1100 junior school pupils. The weekly food parcels are sent home with these children being cared for by other family members and care givers. The distribution of the food parcels takes place at the school and is being controlled by members of the Parish's team and Child Advocates, with assistance from the teachers. To enable people to remember the child they support, the name, grade at school and birth date of the child is given. Photographs are only supplied with the child's & schools permission. We also help in obtaining birth certificates, child grants and to assist the families in other

ways. For sustainability in feeding the children, those who wish to commit to 'support a child', are encouraged to do so for a calendar year.

*All the children from this school live in the informal settlement and its extensions. So they go home to the shacks at night and to their mothers, grannies, siblings or care givers.*

*All children we feed or help are assisted at 'home' by regular visits from the team who keep an eye on them and are on hand to help with problems or abuse and can access any social help that is needed. An integral part of the team is the 2 parish Child Advocates.*

The Child Advocates are trained through the Diocese and assist the teachers in identifying children who have been orphaned and abused, so that special needs can be met. Home visits are done both to identify and trace children who are not at school for a period of time. This has built up a trust between the school, the advocates and the community. Problems with children are brought back to the school and reported if necessary to Child Welfare. Knowing the status of the children in the community has enabled the correct distribution of monthly food parcels to those in need.

Smaller non school going orphaned children & grandparents/guardians are assisted with small weekly food parcels from our school office *when food is available*. Clothing is made available if in hand.

So too the Home Based Care Bambanani reports to the school the children who have lost parents, so that they can be helped. The school and Child Welfare has on occasions asked the Child Advocates to visit ill parents to assess the home circumstances the children are living in and to trace children not at school.

Many people attending Churches forming the Germiston 'Ministers Fraternal' contribute and support the children at the school and in the community, as do some people overseas, notably 'The daughters of the Kings in St Luke's Episcopal Church Live Oak, Fl. & some folk in Bunbury Australia. This truly is a community and ecumenically based project. Many needs within the community are met through the close association of Faith Based organizations and their Ministers, the local school, and the Home based care.

### **Good Hope Day Care centre and HBC**

We have another crèche and Home Based care at the Good Hope informal Settlement, Dukathole Extension 5, which has 78 children from 3 months to school going age, half of whom are orphaned and the rest vulnerable children. Funding to replace the dilapidated shacks with wooden housing was secured from the local shopping complex Golden Walk in Germiston. This 'make over' of the day care centre has been so exciting to watch, as has been the reaction of the children and community.

However we do not have sufficient funds to feed the children with food on a day to day basis, and are at the present moment supplying three good protein meal a week, fruit & vegetables, bread & beans for a further 2 days a week, funded by the Diocese of Bunbury in Australia. *So the vision is to find sponsors to assist in the more regular food supply to the children.*

The Diocese through the parish pays stipends for the 2 teachers and the cook.

Many of the children attending this crèche are siblings of the children who attend the Ekurhuleni primary School and are part of the feeding scheme 'support a child' at the school.

There is a need for children's clothing & basic food parcels in this area for the people from neighbouring countries who are unable to access grants in this country

*Our child advocate Patience, who assists the community & crèche, is currently caring for 54 people who have very little access to grants, many have come looking for work from the rural areas & receive no assistance from any other welfare organisations. Food parcels are distributed if we have the stock to the neediest families.*

### **Makouse Informal Settlement**

This informal settlement is a kilometre from the city centre, situated on the mining property of Simmer & Jack, with an approximate 35-40,000 people living in this area with no sewage, electricity or water services provided. Porto loos and water points are available on the outskirts of the squatter camp only.

Our Anglican parish in Germiston has a small church built by the mining company in this informal settlement where a congregation meets regularly. The vision has been to establish a crèche /day-care centre/safe place for children, on this property to feed & care for the orphans and child headed households that we assist on a day to day basis,

To this end we raised funds to fence the property with a palisade fence and gate and the Child Care advocates are at present identifying children who need help and talking to the members of the community around the church, who support the idea of this project.