

GFS WORLD NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2021

Facebook: GFS Worldwide

MOTTO

*Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil
the law of Christ*

World Executive Team

President: Ms Thembeke Pama

Vice-President: Lay Canon Val Gribble ML

Treasurer: Ms Nokwanda Benya

Secretary: Ms Pumeza Magona

Organiser: Ms Bekiwe Gijana

Youth Officer: Ms Kundai Matikiti

Incoming World President: Mrs Lois Frankforter

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FROM THE WORLD PRESIDENT THEMBEKA PAMA

A Christian greeting to
you

Ash Wednesday 2021 was 348 days since our country South Africa has been under lockdown. The Corona Virus pandemic has changed our lives in many ways and has forced everyone to adapt to new ways of doing things. Our new language of communication makes mention of Teams, Zoom, online meetings, and even families meet virtual via these tools in order to protect one another from this virus. As much as we are separated by physical distance, the bond we have as Christians remains and keeps us connected.

Ash Wednesday marks the start of the season of reflection and repentance. Let us reflect on the blessings of being alive under what the World has been through, continue praying for those that have been afflicted by the virus and remember those that have departed.

South Africa was hoping to host the GFS World Council in July 2021. Due to Covid 19 it was cancelled again to be hosted either in 2022 or 2023 after the virus has been conquered. Thank you to the GFS Worldwide in showing confidence in current leadership by extending my term of office as GFS World President from 2017 to 2022. Thank you, GFS leadership, for keeping the light burning in all branches during this difficult time. Thank you, World Executive, for the good work including my Vice Canon Val for always drafting World Newsletter



and my Organiser for always available in times of need you are all a blessing to me.

Our prayers are with those countries that have been experiencing heavy rains which have taken people's lives, damaged Church buildings, Schools and homes as has been the case in Mozambique, South Africa and others. Let us also continue caring for creation as that will help in curbing Climate Change.

Let us continue to work together for betterment of the World.

Let us continue adhering to Covid 19 protocols to avoid the spread of the virus and to save lives.

My love to you all

Thembeka Pama

AN IMPORTANT INVITATION TO COUNTRY PRESIDENTS

You are reminded of the invitation sent to Country Presidents/Delegates from the World President

I hope this finds you all well. You are invited to a meeting to be hosted by incoming GFS World President Lois Frankforter with following details:

Venue: Virtual

Date: 13 March 2021

Time: 12 PM South African Time

The purpose of the meeting is:

(1) To communicate the outcomes of the questionnaire which was circulated by the incoming GFS World President Lois

(2) To make formal decisions on physical GFS World Council hosting.

(3) To look and discuss the suitability of World Rules in making decisions during this Pandemic.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE GFS WORLD

CAMEROON



Amidst the civic 19 pandemics, the diocese was able to carry the girls along with few activities. July 8th 2020, we had our diocesan GFS week, all the parishes were well represented. There was health talk on COVID 19 and how to prevent the spread, practicals, Bible study etc. Dec 19th 2020 St Michael's and all angels had a get together party with the girls. Talk show, drama, dancing and refreshments made the day colorful and well spent. Here are some of the pictures from the programs mentioned above.



Estelle Elango Dibo, GFS Cameroon

MOZAMBIQUE

I. INTRODUCTION

The newsletter of the Girls Friendly Society (GFS) for the period from January to February 2021, reports on the activities carried out in the period in question.

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic that is plaguing our country and the world in general, we have used the new Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) for carrying out activities.

II. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

From January to February 2021, GFS in the Diocese of Lebombos, carried out the following activities:

Communication with members maintained through a WhatsApp group created where all GFS Coordinators in the Diocese of Lebombos belong.

Through the WhatsApp platform, prayers were offered to patients and their families infected by Covid 19, where the prayer program was previously shared, with specific activities for the GFS Chaplain, the Diocesan Coordinator, the program moderator and members who voluntarily choose the activity to be carried out in the program.

It is important to note that prayers were offered for priests and their relatives infected by Covid 19. Point

out that before the scheduled time for prayers, the sick priest and his wife are added to the GFS WhatsApp group on behalf of the family participate in prayers and at the end be able to say a few words. It is important to note that in one of the prayer programs carried out, we had the privilege of the participation of His Most Reverend Bishop of Lembos who was added to the group before the beginning of the prayers.

Prayers were also offered in the same way to GFS members and their families for the loss of their loved ones.

Regarding Sunday Masses, Parishes via the WhatsApp platform have been sharing the audios with the contents of the liturgy of the day and others realize masses online using the Zoom platform.

III. CHALLENGES

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the State of Emergency was decreed by His Excellence the President of the Republic of Mozambique, where some measures were taken, including the closing of the churches.

IV. EFFECTS OF CYCLONE ELOISE IN MOZAMBIKAN



General picture

Across Southern Africa, the Eloise weather system has left at least 15 people dead, including 7 in Mozambique, 3 in Zimbabwe, 2 in Eswatini, 2 in South Africa, and 1 in Madagascar



Nearly 250,000 people have been affected, and nearly 17,000 houses impacted, by Tropical Cyclone Eloise in Mozambique, according to the latest figures from the Government.



In Mozambique, where Tropical Cyclone Eloise made landfall on 23 January, flooding is still affecting the central region of

the country, especially Buzi District, in Sofala Province, where about 100km² of land appears to be flooded, based on the latest analysis from UNOSAT/UNITAR. Eloise has affected at least 248,481 people, including 16,693 displaced, according to latest data from the National Institute for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction (INGD), as of 25 January. Thirty-three accommodation centres have been activated in impacted areas, with 31 centres in Sofala Province accommodating 15,510 people and 2 centres in Manica Province accommodating 1,183 people. At least 16,967 houses have been destroyed, damaged or flooded, mainly in Sofala Province, and over 411 classrooms and at least 74 health centres will need repairs. Some

humanitarian facilities, including one WFP Warehouse were also damaged. However, WFP's emergency stocks are safe and will be distributed to affected communities. More than 142,189 hectares of crops (including maize, rice, cassava and others) have been flooded in central Mozambique, which could impact the next harvest in April and the ability of affected families to meet their food needs in the period ahead. Source:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/southern-africa-tropical-cyclone-eliose-flash-update-no9-26-january-2021>



Photos are of damage to church buildings.

Impact on the Anglican church in that region

As for the areas where we have Anglican churches, we have a number of destroyed churches, rectories and pre-schools owned by the church. The rebuilding process is slow, as the water is still a challenge. Some areas have received assistance from the Governmental relief and Disaster management office; however, the need is so great.

Veronica Pombe, GFS Mozambique

As we prepare to celebrate Easter may we remember in prayer all those who will once again not be able to join in physical worship in their churches. May we also offer thanks for all the innovative ways in which our members are keeping in touch with each other.

AUSTRALIA

GFS Australia has been amazingly active despite Covid in 2020. Many Children's/Kids Plus groups found it difficult to meet but adult members were active in prayer, keeping in touch with their young members and continuing with other ministries.

Ballarat Diocese donated, amongst many items, 73 rugs and 68 jumpers for children. Brisbane Diocese continued to support Ichthus Camps for children and youth and a Chaplain in the Royal Children's Hospital with grants given for Children's activities in parishes. St Alford's, Melbourne kept in touch with young members and a Liaison Officer was supported and funded for Melbourne Diocese. North Queensland plans to re-start children's ministries and groups in 2021 and has an active adult membership. Perth held successful Holiday Clubs for children and continued to keep in contact with women via Facebook and other ways electronically. We pray about the future of GFS in South Australia.

Sydney Diocese has many school age -groups and Kids Clubs and Playtime groups and we give thanks for them. Prayer meetings were held on Zoom during 2021. Lyn Vaak, Chairman of GFS Sydney and Vice-President of GFS Australia, who has passed away, was honoured posthumously in the Queen's Birthday Honours list with a Medal of the Order of Australia for

service to many women and young girls in the Sydney Diocese. Congratulations for her life of service.

Southern Beaches, Parish in Tasmania, has a thriving Kids Plus group. Also, there are wonderful Kids Plus groups in Brisbane and Bundaberg (Brisbane Diocese).

GFS Australia continues to support GFS in the Dioceses of Popondota and Port Moresby including the Feeding Program in Port Moresby city. In addition, 214 new members were welcomed in Melanesia with new GFS badges given by GFS Australia (Solomon Islands).



Finally, I have been a member of GFS for over 20 years and led our GFS Group/Kids Plus at the Kenmore Church of the Holy Spirit for 16 years with other leaders. My leadership of our GFS Group for girls started in 1997 and morphed into Kids Plus for boys and girls, which closed in 2015. I attended GFS Brisbane meetings to assist with the Brisbane GFS Branch and helped organise church services. Currently, we package donated toiletries for our Home Away from Homelessness and other Anglican Church homes.

Suzanne Claire, President, GFS Australia Inc
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MELANASIA

GFS awareness and training program was conducted at Kolona Primary school on the 1st of Dec 2020 which included some life skill activities. Many of GFS members, Townsend and supporters attended and really enjoyed what they have learned.

Diocese of Guadalcanal

Topics covered in the program are;

1. History of GFS Organisation and GFS Melanesia was presented by the Provincial GFS Coordinator
2. Literacy was presented by the Diocesan Literacy Coordinator, Mrs Edith Padavisu
3. Cooking lessons were presented by the Diocesan MU President Mrs Wendy Saki Besa.
4. GPPOL 3 GFS Members proudly demonstrated life skills with fabric dying/lavalavas.
5. Social Justice was presented by the Anglican Alliance and Women's desk officer, Mrs Tagoline Kabekabe.

The MU Diocesan President Mrs Wendy Saki Besa gave her assurance that as the Diocesan MU President she will always render her support to GFS Melanesia as well as Mothers Union.

This program was fully funded by generosity of the Anglican Alliance and Women's Desk Officer Mrs Tagoline Kabekabe who organised for funding.

GFS Coordinator thanked Mrs Kabekabe and Mrs Wendy for attending and supporting GFS in its programs for members now and into the future.

Diocese of Hanuato

The Mothers Union and GFS Members in the Dioceses of Hanuato held a one week program in September 2020 at Kirakira town, opening with a parade. Most of the live skill activities were carried out during the day while bible studies, bible hunting, singing and prayers were conducted at night times.

The program covered a lot of topics as follows;

Parading on the opening day

Bible studies/bible hunting and singings

Life skills, crocheting, sewing machine repairs, floral arrangements, traditional mat weavings and making concrete bricks.

GFS teachings

The program ended on the 26th September 2020 with the admission of new members, both girls and boys. The program was well attended by the different Anglican parishes throughout Hanuato Diocese and supported by the church Leaders and supporters in the Diocese.

The program was organized by the Diocesan MU President and the GFS Coordinator mostly through fund raising activities with some support by the PMU Office.

The DMU President had express her gratitude for the support rendered by the Diocese, the surrounding communities' leaders and members of MU and GFS in the Diocese.

Betty Kesaka, GFS Coordinator, Melanesia

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IRELAND

Greetings from GFS Ireland to our GFS World Wide Family,

So many things have changed and yet so many have stayed the same since our last newsletter.

From 1st January 2021, GFS in Ireland finds itself having the unique position of being part of the United Kingdom and also being the only country in the European Union where GFS is currently operating. We continue to pray for our political leaders as they find the best way forward without causing long term and lasting damage to our economies as the UK and Europe find how they will work together in the future.

Throughout the island of Ireland, we have been in lockdown since before Christmas. Complete lockdown is expected to continue until the beginning of March and then we will know what parts of society will reopen again. Our younger members have been home schooling, many of our leaders are homeworking and our churches have moved their services back on line until Church buildings are able to reopen safely. We are thankful that there is now a good programme of vaccination in operation, with the most vulnerable already having received their first dose of vaccination. We continue to pray for our medical teams researching, developing and delivering care to those not only diagnosed with Covid19 but the other health issues that can afflict us.

Against this backdrop, our leaders and helpers have continued to develop and deliver the ministry of the GFS in our local branches and communities. The challenges of lockdown have not proved to be obstacles but rather opportunities to develop other ways of delivering our GFS programmes. Our leaders locally, have been preparing and holding on line Carol Services with members, creating Christmas cards to be delivered to the older members of the church family , craft activity packs, bulb planting, caring for nature and the natural environment and being thankful for the blessings that God continues to share with us. We are thankful for the ability to use online media, post, craft packs etc to allow us to stay connected.



One of our GFS leaders shared this with me. The branch leaders had given all of the members a hyacinth bulb, a pot and some compost. Every member was encouraged to plant the bulb and look after the bulb, part of the expectation was whether it was going to have blue or pink flowers. Of course, hyacinths give a lovely scent. Unknown to the members, one of the leaders planted a bulb in water – not the normal environment - and another in compost – the normal environment. Both were planted on the same day, both were watered and cared and both bloomed on the very same day – see the photo attached. This was the message that the leader shared with the members who are currently home schooling, - this is an encouragement to you all, home schooling is not your normal environment, but with food, love, care, encouragement and when we say our prayers and do our best we will grow in faith and God will bless us. What an incredible way to support our members to keep a good attitude and doing their best. It's a lesson, not just to our younger members but leaders as well and that like the scent of the flower, we can show

God's love to those that we come into contact with whether in person or on line.

God often leads us in ways that we can never image, but we thank Him for the promises we see in the Bible,

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"
Phil 4 v 13

Every blessing

Alison Jackson, President GFS Ireland

JAPAN

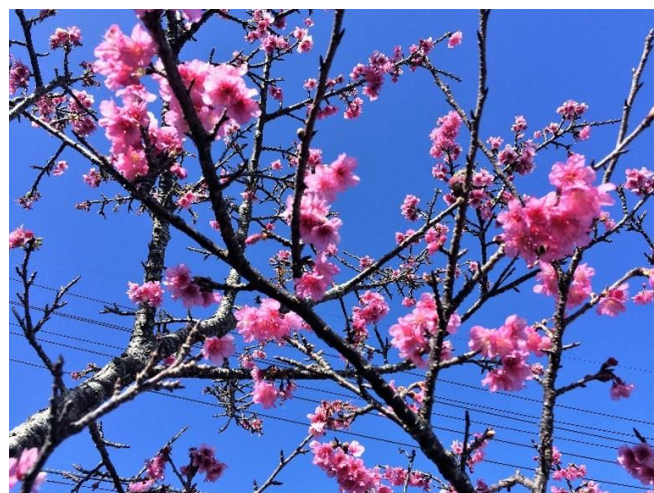
Greetings from GFS Japan



We are looking for a religious life that coexists with covid-19.

By distributing the state of Sunday worship online by each church, more believers, including the elderly, can participate in the worship service. In 2020, the World Day of Prayer service was delivered online for the first time, and we were able to participate from all over the country. The photo is the gathering at Osaka. Until now, each branch had done it individually, but by distributing it online, the number of participants increased and we felt a sense of unity.

Japan will enter the coldest season of the year...but looking forward to the cherry blossom season in March to April.



Okinawa, where Asako lives, always has the first signs of the beautiful cherry blossoms.

SRI LANKA

Background

We were active in the last quarter of 2019 and had big plans for 2020, but sadly Covid-19 got in the way. The country was locked down for several months, twice, and programmes could not be conducted in the traditional manner. All seemed lost, but we took a different approach, changed our strategy and used modern technology to keep the Society running, the staff occupied and the public aware of our activities.

When the country was opened, safety health regulations were observed and staff began attending office on roster basis. However, due to restrictions, our GFS is still not fully operational.

A new way

The smart phone became the device of the moment. WhatsApp was the most accessible and cost-effective method of communication, especially in the outstations. Zoom could not be used in most areas due to limited access to internet and digital resources. Thus, we formed WhatsApp groups island wide to hold

members together and initiated novel projects to keep them busy and interested.

The GFS continues to produce and share the following with these groups:

- Weekly short videos - Sermons, Worship, Bible Studies and "How to make" (craft items, paint, cook etc).
- Special videos - Breast Cancer, Orange Day, Pollution, Christmas Carols.
- Monthly Quizzes.
- Weekly basic English Class "Step by Step".

At our request, members sent in short videos of their hobbies, home gardens etc. recorded on their mobile phones. They were also given opportunities to conduct weekly Bible studies.



Sri Lanka Girls' Friendly Society Christmas Carols December 2020

Please watch our video-based carols programme.

- Part I - English Carols**
 - Part II - Sinhala Carols**
 - Part III - Tamil Carols**
 - Part IV - Message & Carol**
- Have a blessed Christmas!**

All our videos bear the GFS logo and the tag line "Produced by GFS Sri Lanka". Some appeared on our YouTube Channel.

Weekly online English Class via Zoom began this year to assist members of the Deniyaya branch.

GFS Community Project: Women helping Women

Women faced pay cuts and some lost their jobs due to the pandemic, resulting in hardship for them and their families. A community project was initiated to assist such women especially in rural areas to market home-grown fresh produce, home-made pickles, preserves and sweetmeats and handmade items, to the city consumer at low cost. GFS members living in the outstations who faced financial problems due to the pandemic were also able to earn additional income.



A small, smart Sales Outlet was built in our premises for this Project.

We participated in GFS World zoom meetings. At WDP Service, one lesson was read by a member representing Asia.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our 97-year-old Hall cannot be used for programs or hired out for events.

GFS Hostel remains closed until the situation improves.

World Project: English for Employment Prospects
Award ceremonies held in Dickoya and Galle.
New branches- Bandar Wela, Badulla

New Bishop of the Diocese of Colombo- Rt.Rev. Dushantha Rodrigo

Jeanne Withanage, President, GFS Sri Lanka

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

All of PNG is currently in two week's mourning following the death of their first Prime Minister, Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare. He served in the PNG Government from Independence in 1975 to 2017.

As soon as the mourning time is over Port Moresby GFS are hoping to recommence the Feeding Program for homeless children and youth but will still be hampered by strict COVID-19 conditions.

In Popondetta Vivian, the GFS Chaplain and his wife and some members of GFS went on a long walk over a number of days to visit remote GFS branches and to promote GFS. Unfortunately, one of the members was bitten by a snake and Vivian had to ensure her care at the hospital and then to take her to her home village.



The father of the previous World Chaplain of GFS, Father Isaiah Masida, died late last year and Vivian and Mary were able to visit Father Isaiah's family and to take the customary gifts to the Haus Krai.

Val Gribble, on behalf of GFS PNG

ENGLAND AND WALES



**FOR GIRLS
FOR FRIENDSHIP
FOR SOCIETY**

GFS England and Wales November 2020 – March 2021

This has been a very busy time for us in England and Wales as we continue to deliver support for girls and young women throughout COVID and national lockdown. We have been keen to make this a priority because we know how much they miss seeing their friends and GFS.

We have been so impressed with the many virtual groups that have taken place online using Zoom. These have been every week to ensure girls had GFS in their lives which has been vital when they were not attending school or other social activities. In that time, we have had such important conversations with them about their wellbeing and mental health.

It has also been so encouraging to see group leaders and volunteers invest time in driving to deliver care packages and activity packs for the girls so that they knew GFS was thinking about them and that we cared for their happiness.

We launched a further Big Dreamers Club which is a virtual online program designed to inspire and empower girls who attend. This new launch has seen girls attend and add themselves to our growing waiting list from different parts of England and Wales.

Alongside this work we have been looking at how we can develop our infrastructure for the groups and offer them as much support as possible for when we go back to face to face groups, which we hope will be after Easter. We are excited to see this happen and will be making sure our priority is to support groups and celebrate their return for girls.

The charity is saddened to lose our Chair Iana Vidal who after six years of leading our governance is stepping down in line with our Articles. She has done a great

deal to help us bridge into the future and think about the long-term sustainability of the charity. We are delighted to welcome her successor Leanne Massey who has volunteered for GFS and whose daughter attends one of our groups.

Together, the Board, Volunteers, Staff team and most importantly the girls will be celebrating International Women's Day on 8th March to support the theme #ChooseToChallenge. We will all be naming how we personally choose to challenge gender inequality so that girls and young women have improved choices for their future.



Margaret Winks on behalf of GFS England & Wales

SOUTH AFRICA

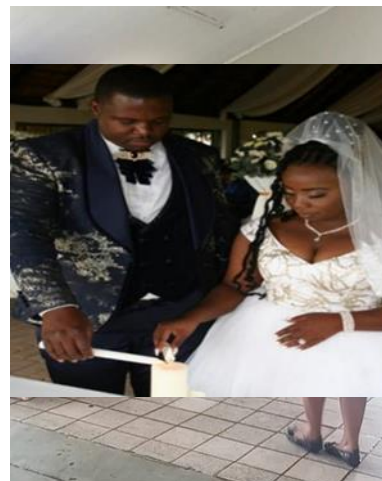


Greetings and Love from Girls and Boys friendly Society South Africa. We thank God for pulling us through to 2021 under the circumstances of the Corona Virus Pandemic. Even though we are operating in times like these, GBFS continues to keep in touch with one another using technology and meet in small groups following the Covid 19 protocols.



On the 13th of December 2020, The Rt Revd. Nkosinathi Ndwandwe Commissioned Ms Zanele Ntenetyana as the GBFS National President of South Africa assisted by the GFS Worldwide President Ms Thembeke Pama during a well-organized service in the Anglican Diocese of Mthatha. The message was from Book of Isaiah 61 and 1 Thessalonian 5. It was about being called to Serve

Members of Girls & Boys Friendly Society who are employed made a decision of ploughing back to disadvantaged households, donating groceries to a bigger number of families as part of bearing one another's burdens. This happened during this challenging time and made a difference in many people's lives. That was part of educating the younger members and instilling in them the value of giving and sharing what one has with those who are worse off.



We are happy to share the news of GFS World Youth Officer Tecla Kundai Matikiti's wedding which was in December 2020. We wish them a blessed union and a bright future.

During this term GBFS sadly lost 3 GBFS members 3 leaders and 2 Chaplains from 3 dioceses. Prayers are requested for the families of all departed. May their Souls Rest in Peace.

Zanele Ntenetyana, SA National President

DONATIONS AND GIFTS

For any gifts to the GFS World Emergency Fund please send to GFS Australia who hold the funds in this term. Account details below:

Account Name: GFS World Account
 Banking Institution: ANZ Bank
 Address: Shop 67, Whitford City, Cnr Marmion & Whitford Avenues
 Hillarys – WA 6025
 Code: BSB 016 494
 Account Number: 392526836
 Swift Number: ANZBAU3M

For all other gifts and payments (World Project, World Travel, World President's Travel, etc.) please send to GFS South Africa

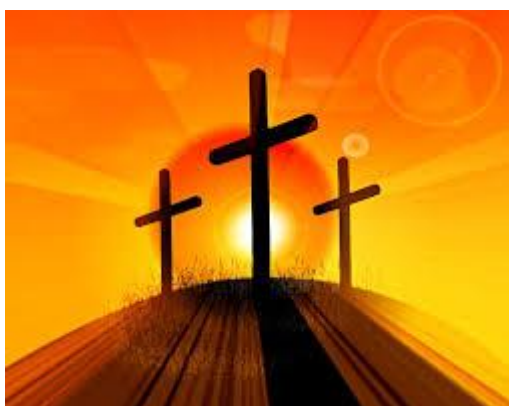
Account Name: GFS World Council
 Bank: First National Bank
 Branch: Balfour Park
 Branch Code: 250655
 Account Number: 62720797953



Swift Code: FIRNZAJJ
Branch Address: Shop 229 Balfour Park Shopping Centre,
Highlands North, 2192

CUT OFF DATE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

15 MAY 2021



**MAY ALL MEMBERS KNOW
THE JOY OF THE RISEN CHRIST
THIS EASTERTIDE**