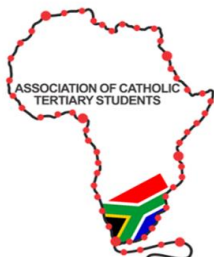


ACTS
ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TERTIARY STUDENTS



ACTS

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

.....
National Movement of Catholic Students



Southern African Catholic
Bishops' Conference

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SECTION ONE: PREAMBLE

We, as the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students, are a young people's movement united in the Catholic faith committed to enrich and empower young people in these four pillars; human, spiritual, doctrinal and academic. We are working towards the development, strengthening and building-up of the local Church within the context of South Africa. We are a non-profit organization who are ecumenical and guided by the principles of non-sexism and non-racism, according to the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

MOTTO: FAITH IN ACTION (James 2:18)

PATRON SAINT: ST THOMAS AQUINAS

SECTION TWO: NAME

2.1 The name of the organization shall be the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students, herein after referred to as ACTS, in relation to IMCS *Pax Romana* we are known as NMCS-South Africa.

2.2 THE EMBLEM

2.2.1 The emblem of ACTS shall be a Rosary shaped like a map of Africa, with the South African flag placed

in South Africa. The cross shall form the “T” letter of the acronym ACTS, which will be in bold letters.

2.2.2 The Rosary shall be black stringed with red beads. There shall be a yellow circle placed in the middle of the cross.

2.2.3 The name: Association of Catholic Tertiary Students shall be writing inside the map of Africa.

SECTION THREE: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 To help Catholic students be Christ centered and to help others to encounter Christ.

3.2 To provide a strong Catholic community for all students at tertiary institutions.

3.3 To actively participate in developing the vision of building the church as a communion.

3.4 To encourage the integration of faith in the lives of our members.

3.5 To challenge and deepen our faith and develop an understanding of the teaching of the church.

3.6 To develop among our members and others an awareness of our context and to educate them on the importance of social transformation, in line with gospel values.

- 3.7 To take a prophetic stance in the Church, campus and society while seeking to constantly contextualize our faith.
- 3.8 To develop effective leadership and share skills among our members for the good of the society and Church.
- 3.9 To create an understanding of and foster non-sexism, non-racism as well as any other form of non-discrimination and democracy in all areas of our lives.
- 3.10 To encourage the integration of Catholic Students at Branch, Provincial, National, Continental and International level and the sharing of resources at these levels.
- 3.11 To work with other Christian, religious and secular groups on issues of common concern. Also, to promote inter-religious dialogue.
- 3.12 To strive for an economically and socially liberating national education system.
- 3.13 To address the transformation of all sectors of South African society and to engage in programs to empower the poor and the oppressed with skills. Through our activities to promote an awareness on issues of concern in the Church and at all levels of society.
- 3.14 To promote cultural exchange with a view of building a dynamic African personality in ACTS.

3.15 To help address the academic and social needs of students.

SECTION FOUR: MEMBERSHIP

4.1 ACTS shall be open to all baptized full-time students at tertiary institutions who support the aims of ACTS and will be subject to the discipline of the organization.

4.2 A Branch must affiliate to ACTS and shall be deemed a Branch provided it has ten members or more, and/or is recognized by the SRC of the respective tertiary institution. If not, the Branch may not participate in ACTS activities.

4.3 Associate membership shall be granted to part-time students and former members of ACTS and they shall be called upon to help the organization.

4.4 Associate members shall not play a role in leadership of the day to day running of ACTS.

4.5 Associate membership should be decided at Branch, provincial and national levels.

4.6 A Branch will be affiliated to ACTS National by paying an annual affiliation fee or fixed amount as decided by the NEC in line with the above-mentioned.

4.8 RIGHTS OF MEMBERS.

- 4.8.1 All members of affiliated Branches are eligible to stand for elections to the executive committee.
- 4.8.2 All members shall have a right to policy formulation and decision making.
- 4.8.3 All members shall have the right to access of ACTS information.
- 4.8.4 Every member shall have the right to be protected from any kind of harassment and/or discrimination

4.9 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 4.9.1 Should a person cease to be a student or fail to meet any requirements of being a member, that person ceases to be a full member.

SECTION FIVE: STRUCTURE

- 5.1 ACTS shall operate at Branch, provincial and national level.
- 5.2 ACTS shall be affiliated to the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) *Pax Romana*.
- 5.3 ACTS shall be under the auspices of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC).

5.4 NATIONAL LEVEL

- 5.4.1 Nationally the organization shall consist of the National Executive Committee (NEC) which is the President, Secretary General, Treasurer General and Secretary for Media and Publicity who shall be elected at Annual National Conference.
- 5.4.2 Provincial Chairpersons shall be elected at the Provincial Annual General Meeting within two (2) months following the Annual National Conference.

5.5 COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The NEC shall consist of:

- 5.5.1 All Provincial Chairpersons
- 5.5.2 The President
- 5.5.3 The Secretary General
- 5.5.4 The Treasurer General
- 5.5.5 The Secretary for Media and Publicity
- 5.5.7 The National Chaplain (Ex Officio)

5.6 Duties of the National Executive Committee: The NEC shall:

- 5.6.1 Be responsible for the daily administration of ACTS.
- 5.6.2 Be responsible for the implementation of the programs of ACTS.

- 5.6.3 Evaluate the progress of ACTS.
- 5.6.4 Convene the Annual National Conference.
- 5.6.5 Not hold office in Branch executives.
- 5.6.6 Shall have authority to dismiss any member of the NEC who flouts protocol and absconds from his or her duties as set out in the code of conduct.
- 5.6.7 Have the authority to co-opt someone to replace the dismissed member.

5.7 The President shall:

- 5.7.1 Be a confirmed Catholic.
- 5.7.2 Be a Chief Executive Officer of ACTS
- 5.7.3 Be a full-time student.
- 5.7.4 Represent ACTS in external affairs. Where this is not possible the NEC will decide who will represent ACTS.
- 5.7.5 Maintain regular contact with other executive members, in particular the national office in order to ensure that constant, effective reflection takes place.
- 5.7.6 Deliver the presidential speech as a way of opening conference.
- 5.7.7 In consultation with the National Chaplain have powers to take emergency decisions which are in

the interest of ACTS and have to be ratified by the rest of the NEC.

5.7.8 Be responsible for the application of principles, policies and goals of ACTS.

5.7.9 Preside over all meetings of the NEC and chair the Annual National Conference.

5.8 The Secretary General shall:

5.8.1 Be a confirmed Catholic.

5.8.2 Be a Chief Administrative Officer of ACTS.

5.8.3 Keep all records of ACTS.

5.8.4 With the President be the custodians of all assets of ACTS.

5.8.5 Together with the President convene NEC meetings and set the agenda thereof.

5.8.6 Co-ordinate the activities of NEC members at all levels.

5.8.7 Head the policy formulation department of ACTS.

5.8.8 Present a secretariat report on the activities of ACTS at the Annual National Conference.

5.8.9 In an event of the President not being there, be the Acting President.

5.8.10 Ensure a smooth transfer of all the records of ACTS to the next NEC.

5.9 The Treasurer General shall:

- 5.9.1 Be a confirmed Catholic.
- 5.9.2 Be responsible for the initiation and coordination of fund raising activities of ACTS with the Projects Officer and the National Chaplain.
- 5.9.3 Ensure a smooth transfer of all financial records to the next NEC.
- 5.9.4 Present a budget annually in consultation with the NEC that is to be sent to the SACBC.
- 5.9.5 Present financial statements at the Annual National Conference.

5.10 The Secretary for Media and Publicity shall:

- 5.10.1 Be a confirmed Catholic.
- 5.10.2 Be the Chief Information Officer and be responsible for promoting ACTS in media related activities internally and externally.
- 5.10.3 See to the publication of *ACTionS* under the supervision of the national office.
- 5.10.4 Ensure that the positions, policies and principles of ACTS are well reflected in the press and public.

5.11 Provincial Level

- 5.11.1 Branches shall elect one representative to form provincial committees.

5.11.2 The Provincial Annual General Meeting shall elect the Provincial Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Secretary for Media and Publicity

5.12 The Provincial Chairperson shall:

5.12.1 Be a confirmed Catholic.

5.12.2 Be a full-time student.

5.12.3 Convene regular provincial meetings.

5.12.4 Ensure that the province is adequately represented at national gatherings.

5.12.5 Ensure that the National Program of Action is taken up at Provincial level.

5.12.6 Maintain a regular contact with the rest of the NEC.

5.12.7 Submit reports on the activities of the province to the Secretary General.

5.12.8 Ensure that effective leadership is built in the province through effective formation events.

5.12.9 Be elected to offices created by the NEC or National Conference.

5.12.10 Share in the collective responsibility of the NEC.

5.13 Branch level shall:

5.13.1 Be the primary organ of ACTS.

5.13.2 Elect one member to form the provincial committee.

5.13.3 Be constituted of ten or more members.

- 5.13.4 May have guidelines which are in line with the National Constitution.
- 5.13.5 All Branches must send their guidelines to the National Office to be approved by the NEC.

5.14 Duties of the Branch Executive Committee:

- 5.14.1 Be responsible for the implementation of the policies and programs of ACTS.
- 5.14.2 Be responsible for organizing and expanding ACTS.
- 5.14.3 Represent ACTS in all activities on campus that require student inputs.
- 5.14.4 Represent ACTS in civil and educational for a in the immediate area of their campus.
- 5.14.5 Maintain regular contact with the Provincial Chairperson, Secretary General and national office.
- 5.14.6 Send a quarterly report to the Provincial Chairperson on the activities of the Branch.

5.15 Vacation of seats:

A member of the NEC shall vacate his or her seat if he/she

- 5.15.1 Ceases to be a student.

- 5.15.2 Resigns from his or her seat in writing to the President or NEC one month before such resignation is due.

- 5.15.3 Absents himself/herself voluntarily from two consecutive meetings of the NEC without having obtained leave to do so.

SECTION SIX: CHAPLAINS AND MENTORS

- 6.1 Chaplains shall be drawn from among clergy. The mentor / chaplaincy assistant shall be appointed by the Bishop upon recommendation of the parish priest.

6.2 Role of Branch Chaplain:

- 6.2.1 To nurture links between ACTS, the local Church and the Universal Church.
- 6.2.2 To provide spiritual guidance.
- 6.2.3 To update membership about new Church developments.
- 6.2.4 To help in the accomplishment of the aims and objectives of ACTS.
- 6.2.5 To be a pro-active animator of the student community.
- 6.2.6 Chaplains shall have speaking but not voting rights in all forums of ACTS.
- 6.2.7 Chaplains shall act as electoral officers.

6.3 Role of Provincial Chaplains:

- 6.3.1 To liaise with Provincial committee.

- 6.3.2 To liaise with all other chaplains in the Province.
- 6.3.3 Be a member of the Provincial committee and assist in such meetings.
- 6.3.4 May address Provincial meetings and Provincial conference.
- 6.3.5 Accept the oath of the Provincial Chairperson and his/her Executive Committee.

6.4 Role of the National Chaplain:

- 6.4.1 He should be based near the national office.
- 6.4.2 He shall liaise with Branch and Provincial Chaplains.
- 6.4.3 He shall be appointed by the SACBC.
- 6.4.4 He shall be a member of the NEC meetings and assist in such meetings.
- 6.4.5 He may address NEC meetings and National Conference.
- 6.4.6 In the absence of the patron he shall receive the oath of the President, Secretary General, Treasurer General and Secretary for Media and Publicity.

6.5 The Patron:

- 6.5.1 The Bishop responsible for Youth in the SACBC shall be the Honorary Chaplain.
- 6.5.2 He shall give advice to ACTS on matters relating to Church doctrine.

- 6.5.3 He shall have the right to suspend or dismiss any member of the NEC in consultation with the National Chaplain.
- 6.5.4 In consultation with the SACBC and ACTS National Chaplain, He shall have the right to dissolve ACTS.
- 6.5.5 He shall be accorded a special status in all gathering of ACTS.
- 6.5.6 He will be granted associate membership by the NEC and / or National Conference.
- 6.5.7 He shall take the oath of the President, Secretary General, Treasurer General and Secretary for Media and Publicity.

SECTION SEVEN: CONFERENCES

7.1 Annual National Conferences

- 7.1.1 The Annual National Conference shall consist of the NEC, all Provincial Committees and at least five delegates from each Branch.
- 7.1.2 The Annual National Conference shall be held in the winter vacation.

7.2 Objectives of the Annual National Conference

- 7.2.1 Is the highest decision-making organ of ACTS.
- 7.2.2 Is the forum where policy decisions are taken or ratified, these being binding on each campus.

However, localities can decide how these are implemented in a manner that fits their context.

7.2.3 Decide on a National Program of Action.

7.2.4 Must reflect on the past and represent programs of ACTS.

7.2.5 Shall elect the President, Secretary General, Treasurer General and Secretary for Media and Publicity.

7.3 The Annual Leadership Conference

7.3.1 The Annual Leadership Conference shall be composed of the NEC, PEC and BEC and invited persons.

7.3.2 Will be held during the summer vacation.

7.4 Duties of the Leadership Conference

7.4.1 To have formation events.

7.4.2 To have reports on programs of Branches.

7.4.3 To evaluate the progress of the NEC.

7.4.4 To adopt the co-opted member of the NEC or elect such a member.

7.5 Annual Provincial Conference

7.5.1 The Annual Provincial Conference shall consist of the PEC, BEC and all the members of ACTS in the Province.

7.5.2 The Annual Provincial Conference within 2 months after the Annual National Conference, to elect the top 4 of the province.

7.6 Duties of the Annual General Meeting

7.6.1 It shall be the highest decision-making body in the Province.

7.6.2 Shall elect the Provincial committee.

7.6.3 Reflect on the policies of ACTS.

7.6.4 Make recommendations on issues of importance that need to be discussed at National Conference.

7.6.5 Derive a Program of Action for the Province which shall not conflict the National Program.

7.7 The Branch Annual General Meeting

7.7.1 The Branch AGM shall be the highest decision-making body of a Branch but the lowest in ACTS.

7.7.2 It shall be held by all Branches no later than three weeks after the inauguration of the SRC of the respective tertiary institution.

7.8 Objectives of the AGM

7.8.1 To elect Branch leadership.

7.8.2 Reflect on progress of the Branch.

7.8.3 To formulate programs and projects for the Branch.

SECTION EIGHT: MEETINGS

NEC MEETINGS

- 8.1 The President shall convene a meeting within two months of the Conference.
- 8.2 There shall be four NEC meetings in a year unless business dictates otherwise.
- 8.3 Sittings shall preferably be during weekends and/or holidays.
- 8.4 There should be punctual attendance at meetings which should be made known in good time to all concerned members.
- 8.5 Clear decisions with no equivocation must be taken and b applicable within the scope of ACTS.
- 8.6 All the above will be applicable in all structures of ACTS.

SECTION NINE: QUORUM

- 9.1 One third of the membership will constitute a quorum of any meeting of the structures in ACTS.
- 9.2 The Annual Conference shall be constituted by a two thirds majority of delegates. Failing which, the conference will be adjourned for twenty-four hours and be reconstituted. Otherwise a special conference will have to be called.

9.3 Required votes shall be two thirds majority and all question and decisions shall be decided by a simple majority.

SECTION TEN: DURATION AND DISSOLUTION

10.1 Terms of office

10.1.1 National Executive Committee:

The NEC shall be elected annually at the Annual National Conference. Members of the NEC may hold office for two terms in the top four positions, except the president unless otherwise re-elected.

10.1.2 Provincial Executive Committee:

The PEC shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting

10.1.3 Branch Executive Committee:

The BEC shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

SECTION ELEVEN: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ACTS MEMBERS

This section is a set of rules to help ensure that the Constitution is adhered to and that the members of ACTS are accountable and responsible for fulfilling all their functions. All members should at all times strive to be

sensitive to each other and to the functioning of the committee as a collective.

11.1 Violation of the Code of Conduct

11.1.1 It is a misconduct or any behavior that is judged to be in disrepute with ACTS. Any person guilty of misconduct shall be judged to have committed a violation of code of conduct.

11.2 Violation of code of conduct includes:

11.2.1 Behavior which is judged to be a violation of non-sexism, non-racism and democracy.

11.2.2 Substance abuse which impinges on the functioning of the committee.

11.2.3 Negligent handling of official documents.

11.2.4 Any unauthorized use of ACTS property, funds and equipment for personal advantage.

11.2.5 Malicious disruption of meetings that undermines the integrity of an individual member or of the association as a whole.

11.2.6 Malicious disruption of meetings and malicious interference with orderly functioning of the committee.

11.2.7 Blatant and disruptive contravention of the decision collectively made by the committee.

11.2.8 Deliberate misrepresentation of an NEC decision or position.

11.2.9 Neglect of official responsibility including but not limited to:

11.2.9.1 Non-attendance of one or more NEC meetings without due apology.

11.2.9.2 Failure to perform delegated tasks on time without good reasons.

11.2.9.3 Arriving late for a meeting without an apology.

11.3 Disciplinary Procedures

11.3.1 The NEC can motivate for actuation of a disciplinary committee if it is felt that there is violation of code of conduct.

11.3.2 The disciplinary Committee shall consist of three nominated NEC members and the National Chaplain for each case.

11.3.3 In nomination of the Disciplinary Committee one should be sensitive to gender and race issues and should endeavor to incorporate the diversities of views prevalent on an issue.

11.4 Procedure for the Disciplinary Committee

- 11.4.1 Clarity should be reached as to the aspect of conduct that the accused is perceived to have violated.
- 11.4.2 The accused should offer some defense.
- 11.4.3 The decision should be reached on the degree of violation and an appropriate sentence should be recommended.
- 11.4.4 The disciplinary committee should motivate for its decisions and make recommendation for the appropriate sentence.

11.5 Disciplinary measures that can be taken in appropriate circumstances:

- 11.5.1 Performing tasks.
- 11.5.2 Reprimand.
- 11.5.3 Strong reprimand with public apology.
- 11.5.4 Expulsion- after suspension or in very serious circumstances.
- 11.5.5 Any combination of the above.

Glossary

1. **Member:** - A full-time registered student with Higher Institutions of Learning and Training.
2. **Associate member:** - A former member of the association.
3. **ACTionS:** - Publications of ACTS and/or media related business part of it, such as *Newsletters* to keep the community abreast of what is happening in the community.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

THE ACTS IDENTITY

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

FOREWORD

June 1999

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

This booklet on the 'Identity of ACTS' is part of a series of *ACTS National Documents* that are being produced by ACTS National. These documents include, thus far, the ACTS National Constitution, ACTS Identity and a Manuel of Procedures. Hopefully, more such documents will emerge which will serve to enhance the growth and development of the organisation.

This particular document on the identity of ACTS was originally published within the first two editions of Actions, the ACTS National Publication, during 1998. It was thereafter felt that it would be of benefit to new members of ACTS to have these articles published in a booklet so that there would be a document which could be used by the various ACTS Branches to engage themselves as to the role of ACTS, not only within the local Institution of Higher Learning, but also on a national level.

The document contains a *brief history* of the organisation showing the background to Catholic student organisations in South Africa. Thereafter, the *elements of ACTS* as a

student-driven faith community within the local Church are included. And finally, a reflection is included looking at ACTS as a *'living and believing community'* being challenged to respond to the "signs of the times" in the context of the South African situation.

Hopefully, this document will serve not only to clarify questions around the role of an ACTS Branch at the various Institutions of Higher Learning, but also help to challenge the members of ACTS to get involved in the many issues which face tertiary students especially during this period of transformation. It is during this period of transformation which gives national student structures like ACTS the opportunity to truly become part of the development of new youth policy for the country dealing with questions like the development of the Youth Policy 2000, COLTS or the National Youth Service Programme.

Lastly, it must be emphasized that the formulation of the identity of ACTS is an ongoing process and therefore this document is only a first attempt to capture the elements which have emerged within the context of a process of life over the past six years. Hopefully, this process will continue so that ACTS can play its rightful role not only

within the world of tertiary students, but also within the local Church of South Africa

Father Michael Hagan
National Chaplain to ACTS

A brief history of ACTS

The Association of Catholic Tertiary Students was founded in Johannesburg in December 1993 when both CASA (Catholic Students Association) and NCFS (National Catholic Federation of Students) were dissolved.

Initially, NCFS was the only Catholic student body in South Africa, however, this changed when students attending black campuses broke away in the early seventies to form CASA. Consequently, CASA then existed at historically black campuses whereas NCFS existed at historically white campuses.

Following the changes within the country in 1990 attempts were then made to merge the two student bodies into one unified student movement. However, eventually after various attempts had been made to unify, it was decided to form a new Catholic student body called the Association

of Catholic Tertiary Students that includes students from Universities, Technicon's and Training Teacher Colleges.

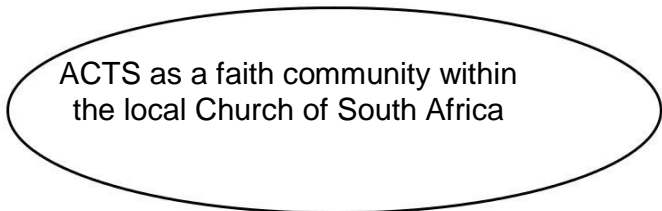
The Identity of ACTS

A student-driven faith community within the Church responding to the "signs of the times" within the context of South Africa.

The Elements of ACTS as a student-driven faith community within the local Church



PIRIT
IN THE HOLY SPIRIT



**ACTS as a faith community within
the local Church of South Africa**

IDENTITY OF ACTS

TO 'SIGNS OF THE
TIMES' in the S.A
students context

- Educational Crisis
- Exclusions
- Land Issues
- Transformation

- Responds
- Interprets
- Discerns

The elements of the identity of ACTS have emerged over the past five years of its existence within the context of a process of life rather than being decided upon by a small group of individuals. The following represent the most important aspects of its identity, whilst acknowledging that other elements could develop in time.

The Catholic student organisation of South Africa is called the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students

All Branches are to be called ACTS and the names CATHSOC or CASA are not to be used. This name change has been a difficult and lengthy process at some institutions, however, where considered necessary, creative compromises have been reached. E.g. ACTS KOLBE at UCT.

What is essential, is that each Branch is ACTS itself. Whereas in the past NCFS had Catholic Branches which were affiliated to the national body. Within ACTS, each Branch, similar to CASA, is already ACTS itself.

Catholic organisation that is Christ-centered

The organisation is Christ-centred within the Catholic Church. Non-Catholics may belong to the organisation but not within the leadership of the organisation. All Chairpersons, Provincial representatives and National Executive Members are to be confirmed and practicing Catholics.

Each Branch of ACTS is called to become a faith community, that is, to become a “living and believing” community. This community is where students should experience a sense of acceptance, belonging and love. At the same time this faith community, is challenged to be instrumental in the integration of life and faith by engaging itself in attempting to respond to the “signs of the times.” Where considered necessary ACTS is to take a prophetic stance to a particular situation in the light of the Gospel.

Non-sexist and non-racial

The organisation is non-sexist and gender issues are to be important to all Branches. ACTS is challenged to change the paradigm within the Church and society from masculine domination to the inclusion of feministic values thereby, creating a holistic view.

ACTS is non-racial. Non-racialism with the realisation that South Africa is part of Africa and that we are developing a student organisation within the context of a developing African Church.

Student Organisation within the Church

ACTS is a movement for tertiary students, which exists at Institutions for Higher Education within South Africa. Each ACTS Branch has to be affiliated to the local SRC and is to be a prophetic presence challenging the life of the institution. It is a student-driven organisation empowering students to lead within the Church, within Institutions of

Higher Education and within society as a whole. Only full-time students may be members, however, this requirement ceases in the case of Correspondence Universities, e.g. UNISA.

As a student organisation, ACTS should where possible involve itself in the Youth Structure within the Diocese thus contributing to the development of the Youth of the local Church.

Development of the local Church of South Africa

As part of the local Church, ACTS is challenged to participate in the development of the local Church by contributing to the pastoral plan with its vision to be a 'community serving humanity'. The organisation should in particular be a vehicle of enculturation whereby faith and African indigenous culture be given space to develop a local Church free from its colonial past.

Academic Movement

ACTS is an academic organisation engaging in a critical analysis of the dominant ideas and trends of the times, trying to contribute to the development of justice, peace and human rights.

Political unaffiliated

ACTS has agreed to remain neutral with regards to the Freedom Charter so that all students belonging to various political backgrounds can find a home within ACTS.

In terms of the 'interior rules and procedures of the Pan African IMCS', ACTS whether nationally, provincially or locally, may not be affiliated to a particular political party. Added to this, however, it must be emphasised that this does not mean there should be no involvement in political matters. Rather, ACTS should address all issues, but its view as an organisation to a particular issue should be a view in the light of the truth as seen within the Gospel and not based simply on the view of a particular political party.

ACTS as its name says is an Association. Its inner structure has been taken from both CASA and NCFS. On the one hand it is a MOVEMENT with centralist features from CASA and on the other hand it is a FEDERATION from NCFS. What is important is that ACTS is a new organisation whereby the tension between a movement and federation will always exist. Communication should run in two directions. In the first place, communication should be channelled from the central body through the provincial representative within the province and from the Secretary General through the National Office creating space for the initiatives of the local Branches.

Within the auspices of the South African Catholic Bishops Conference- nationally, provincially and locally

ACTS, nationally, functions within the auspices of the National Youth Department of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference. Ultimate responsibility of ACTS lies with the Bishop responsible for the "Laity and Youth" acting in conjunction with the National Chaplain of ACTS.

Locally and provincially the organisation lies within the auspices of the Local Chaplaincy/Parish and diocese and therefore strong links should be developed and maintained with the local Branch Chaplain and with the Bishop of the Diocese.

ACTS is affiliated to the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS)

ACTS is the name for NMCS - South Africa. ACTS is part of the International Movement of Catholic students (IMCS), which has its head office in Paris. South Africa is part of the Pan-African Region with its African coordinating office in Nairobi. The region of Africa is divided into four sub-regions, namely: Western, Central, Eastern and Southern. South Africa belongs with Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, Malawi and Zambia to the Sub-Region of Southern Africa, the headquarters of the

Southern African Sub-Region until December 1998 being in Harare, Zimbabwe.

ACTS is recognised as a National Youth Structure within South Africa

ACTS is recognised by the National Youth Commission of South Africa as a national youth structure. This recognition gives the organisation a similar status to other national youth structures, for example, political parties. This has the consequence that no SRC within the country has the power not to affiliate to an ACTS Branch.

As a national youth structure the organisation is affiliated to the South African Youth Council (SAYC) and is also recognised by the South African Union of SRCs (SAUSRC).

ACTS as a student-driven faith community within the local Church responding to the “signs of the times” within the South African Context.

ACTS as a student-driven faith community is challenged to participate in the development of the local Church of Southern Africa by contributing to the accomplishment of the Pastoral Plan with its vision to be a “Community serving Humanity”. As a ‘living community’ comprising a group of believers, each faith community whether nationally, provincially or locally, is challenged to be instrumental in integrating faith and life by engaging itself in attempting to respond to the “signs of the times” within the South African context.

The process of responding to the “signs of the times” requires that each ACTS faith community be open to the workings of the Holy Spirit. It is only as a believing

and praying community that each community is able to discern as to how the organisation should interpret a particular situation. It must be stressed that ACTS itself should address all issues, including those issues of a political nature, however, our response as an organisation should be in the light of the truth as seen within the Gospel and not based simply on the view of a particular political party.

Whilst realising that each Institution of Higher Education faces different problems, it is essential that ACTS attempts to look at the “signs of the times” which in some way affect the organisation as a whole. The following is an attempt to list some of the challenges that are present within the South African context:

The Primary “Sign of the Times”: The process of transformation in South Africa

Whilst ACTS is challenged to engage itself with the trends within the global context, namely the issues surrounding feminism, ecology and the search for the spiritual especially as manifested within the “new age” movement, the primary “sign of the time” within the South African context is that of participating in the process of transformation by contributing to its reconstruction and development, addressing the imbalances of the past.

As a tertiary student organisation ACTS is challenged to attempt to change the mind-set of “resistance” to the apartheid state to that of the “development” of an African country free of its colonial past whilst at the same time being non-racial.

This implies that where possible all ACTS Branches should try to participate in the “broad transformation forum” of the local Institution of Higher Education. The organisation should attempt to become an agent of transformation on the campus attempting to be part of the process of shifting local institutions from that of Euro centric bodies to that of African cantered institutions.

Nationally, ACTS is challenged to contribute to the formulation of National Policy within structures such as the National Youth Commission and the South African Youth Council. As a youth structure ACTS nationally, provincially and locally is challenged to commit itself to the comprehensive and holistic vision for the development of the young people of South Africa. (Youth Policy 2000)

Implications, in particular for ACTS, resulting from the transformation process of South Africa. Holistic Paradigm

South African society and thereby ACTS is challenged to be aware of the global shift from a masculine dominated paradigm to a holistic paradigm through the inclusion of what is an ecological and feministic mind-set. Such a holistic paradigm calls for a new look at all aspects of life including, for example, the understanding of leadership and authority; the relationship between masculine and feminine values; the role of technology and the inclusion of emotional. ACTS is thereby challenged whether nationally, provincially or locally to be sensitive to a holistic outlook when dealing with all issues of the organisation especially with regards to gender issues.

Economic Empowerment

At the SACC Youth Forum Conference in December 1997 it was stated that ultimately the wealth of the country is controlled by five companies. These statistics have been supported by the statistics supplied by the “Poverty and Inequality Report” (RIP) produced during 1998 where it is stated that about 18 million people can be considered poor earning R 352.53 per month per adult. Added to this about 10 million people can be considered as being “ultra-poor” who earn R 193.77 per month per adult.

The issues relating to economic empowerment which ACTS need to look at, are amongst others, as to how the organisation should address poverty, in particular, poverty amongst students; the life-style of members, generally or, for example, the relationship of privileged and poor students at national gatherings.

Ultimately ACTS needs to engage itself around the issue of the *re-distribution of wealth* so that a more equitable society can emerge and added to this, debate and discussion should be encouraged around the questions of economic policy, e.g. GEAR.

Land

According to statistics given at the SACC Youth Forum in December 1997, it is believed that Christian Churches own about 7% of the country's land. Possibly the issue of land does not affect ACTS directly, however, it is important for students to be aware of the issue of land especially the issue of land owned by Christian Churches and therefore, where possible, debates and discussions around the reclaiming of land should be encouraged.

Ecumenical / Inter-Faith

It was the experience of the youth structures during the eighties and early nineties that the Christian Churches together with other Faith Communities were able to form a unified body of resistance against apartheid. However, with the emergence of democracy in 1994 the ecumenical movement has had to re-discover its role in general but also the role, played within Institutions of Higher Education. Where possible ACTS locally should attempt to be instrumental in developing "Religious Student Councils" so that an Inter-Faith body can play a meaningful role within student structures. Where possible ACTS should also try to involve itself in the activities of the SACC Youth Forum and thereby be part of the youth ecumenical body.

Challenges facing young people in particular Identity Crisis

At dawn of the year 2000 we live in a “global village” with the result that a uniform culture based on economic domination is developing throughout the world especially in Africa. The danger exists in particular that the youth will lose their identity by being flooded with foreign values through the media. The issue which ACTS as a student organisation will have to address, is that the process of “*de-Africanisation*” will largely be carried-out by the youth themselves.

Youth Unemployment

One of the major issues facing all young people including graduates is that of unemployment. According to the CASE Research for the National Youth Commission based on the “1995 Survey”

conducted by the Central Statistical Service, unemployment among the youth of South Africa stands at 43%. The issue facing all young structures including ACTS is, whether the organisation can attempt to provide its members but possibly also young women and men in general with a wide range of vocational and life skills so as to equip them to find employment or to create employment for themselves.

Spiritual and Moral Renewal

During the eighties and early nineties the majority of the youth of the country were focused around the issue of ending apartheid by to a large extent making the country ungovernable. Now that through democracy legitimacy exists within the country, it is the responsibility of youth leaders to ensure that a re-orientation of the young people of the country takes place through the re-claiming of spiritual and moral

values. Where possible ACTS at a local level should set-up “faith-sharing” groups where students can try through discussion and prayer to integrate their life experiences and faith as they grapple and struggle with the God of Life on their spiritual journey.

AIDS / HIV Virus

Based on government statistics it is evident that South Africa faces a crisis with regards to AIDS and the HIV Crisis. At present (1998) about 1 500 people, especially many young people, contract the HIV virus daily. It is the responsibility of ACTS to ensure that all Branches engage in serious debate around the issue of AIDS in its entirety. Added to this, ACTS is challenged to be instrumental in developing a “culture of human relationships” based on the truth of the Gospel.

Challenges facing students of Institutions of Higher Education.

The Educational Crisis

Many of the Institutions of Higher Education especially the “historically disadvantaged institutions” also referred to as the “historically black institutions” are facing the effects of apartheid caused through the lack of resources. Local ACTS Branches are challenged to respond to the various situations so that the imbalances and inequities of the past can be addressed. Issues relating to *curriculum development* and *student financing* should especially be addressed by ACTS National on the level of Policy Development within the National Youth Commission and the South African Youth Council.

National Youth Service

Whether nationally, provincially or locally, ACTS should continue the discussion around the issue of the concept of a National Youth Service Program for South Africa as being considered by the National Youth Commission. Each Branch should attempt to engage in meaningful debate and discussion around the issue of contributing to the development of the country as a whole especially by “ploughing back” into the community from the skills attained at a tertiary level.

Challenges facing the youth, within the local Church of South Africa.

Youth as a priority

As a functioning youth organisation within the auspices of the SACBC, ACTS has the responsibility to co-operate in partnership for the development of the youth of the local Church both nationally and also within the dioceses. ACTS should where possible ensure that the needs of the youth are catered for and be given a high priority with regards to vision and to resources.

Enculturation

The fact that ACTS Branches meet as liturgical communities regularly, means that a creative space is available for experiencing liturgy as Africans whereby

the full meaning of enculturation can manifest itself. As academics; reflection and discussion can accompany this process. Whilst enculturation of the liturgy must be given priority, sensitivity to include all students of different cultures must be considered. In fact ACTS has the potential to become an instrument of enculturation within the local Church of South Africa.

The role of Women

Like society as a whole, ACTS inherits the patriarchal mind-set and is therefore called to be prophetic in ensuring that women experience the organisation on all levels as embodying an openness to develop a mind-set where both women and men are included. All committees within ACTS should reflect the sensitivity to gender and where possible ACTS

should participate within the gender portfolios of the various SRCs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ACTS has the task in the first place of being an expression of the Kingdom of God and not simply to be an institution or a structure. It is through ACTS that students studying at the various Institutions of Higher Education in South Africa should be given the possibility of encountering the God of life so that the Gospel can truly take on root within the youth culture of South Africa and thereby become relevant for the young people of the country.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

MANUAL OF PROCEDURES

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

SECTION ONE: POCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED DURING CONFERENCE SESSIONS

- 1.1 Any delegates from any Branch is free to intervene at any time during any session of the Conference.
- 1.2 During the Reports (NEC, Chaplain and Financial reports). Session intervention is made following the principle of one voice per Branch.
- 1.3 The following are in order of precedence as regards to intervention:
 - a) A member can call for a point of order only when the defined procedure is not followed.
 - b) A member can call for a point of personal privilege to react to issues when he or she is the subject of discussion.
- 1.4 A point of information can be called for when asking for information and/or clarification.

- 1.5 The Chairperson reserves the rights to stop any speaker on the floor if s/he is out of order, having abused the point of privilege or clarity granted to him/her by the Chairperson.
- 1.6 Motions are presented by any Branch to the Chairperson and each motion must be seconded by another Branch.
- 1.7 A motion of order has priority over all other motions.
- 1.8 When the Chairperson receives an amended motion, s/he is obliged to ask the mover of the original motion if he or she agrees to withdraw his/her motion. If s/he agrees, it is only the amended motion that is voted upon or for. If not, the vote will be conducted to choose one of the two motions.

SECTION TWO: RULES AND PROCUDURES FOR ACTS NATIONAL ELECTIONS

PART ONE: NOMINATIONS

1.1 NOMINATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- 1.1.1 Nominations, including self-nominations, must be submitted to the electoral officer or conference secretariat in writing or orally, 24 hour before the start of the elections. This may be done during the actual business of nominations and voting itself.
- 1.1.2 A nomination of a given candidate should be seconded by a minimum of ten (10) members

from affiliated Branches at the conference, excluding the nominating member.

1.1.3 A nomination shall be considered valid, provided the candidate declares verbally or in writing prior to elections that they are willing to contest for such a portfolio.

1.1.4 Nominations shall be from members of affiliated ACTS Branches.

1.1.5 If the nomination is done in writing, a secret ballot shall be used. Each delegate is to write one name under each portfolio. The first five (5) people shall be considered nominated and each of the nominated candidate should declare verbally their acceptance of nomination. If some of the nominated members decline, the next in

the order of nomination is to be asked to stand for election.

1.1.6 A candidate who fails to be elected for a position may be nominated for a subsequent position.

1.1.7 All nominations should clearly state which portfolio the person is being nominated for.

1.1.8 In case of a person being nominated for multiple positions s/he must indicate the position s/he prefers.

1.1.9 All nominated candidates to any of the vacant positions are required to be physically present at the conference.

1.1.10 The following positions shall be vacant:
President, Secretary General, Treasurer
General and Secretary for Media and
Publicity.

PART TWO: ELECTION AND VOTING PROCEDURES

2.1 ELECTION AND VOTING PROCEDURES FOR THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

2.1.1 After completion of all business in the
conference, a motion for the dissolving of the
National Executive Committee (NEC) shall be
called by any member that holds voting rights in
all forums of ACTS.

2.1.2 The motion shall be seconded by at least ten
(10) members present at conference and such

members should hold voting rights in all forums of ACTS.

2.1.3 Only those delegates that hold voting rights in all forums of ACTS will be eligible to vote.

2.1.4 The Chief Electoral Officer shall ensure that all members eligible to vote are identified and sit accordingly.

2.1.5 Each candidate shall be accorded five (5) minutes to speak and thereafter answer questions from the delegates, if any.

2.1.6 Elections shall be conducted through a secret ballot.

2.1.7 Each eligible delegate shall have only one vote.

2.1.8 The counting of votes is done immediately after each round of voting.

2.1.9 The winners of each portfolio are declared by a simple majority vote.

2.1.10 The announcement of winners shall be made after each round of voting.

2.1.11 In the case were the winner(s) have not produced the proof of confirmation to the Chief Election Officer during the nomination process, the winner(s) must ensure that such documents are submitted soon after the completion of the election and voting process but before the induction of the new NEC.

PART THREE: DUTIES DURING THE ELECTION AND VOTING

3.1 DUTIES DURING THE ELECTION AND VOTING PROCESS:

3.1.1 The ACTS National Chaplain or any delegated Chaplain shall be the Chief Electoral Officer.

3.1.2 The Chief Electoral Officer shall coordinate and supervise all the electoral and voting processes.

3.1.3 The Chief Electoral Officer is recommended to form an Electoral Committee for the purposes of the elections and voting processes.

3.1.4 The Electoral Committee shall consist of the following:

- a) Chaplain(s) present at the Conference, who become electoral officer(s)
- b) The Conference Secretariat
- c) Any other member(s) co-opted by the Chief Electoral Officer to assist in the election and voting processes, provided such a member does not hold any voting rights in all forums of ACTS.

SECTION THREE: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ACTS BRANCHES

- 1.1 Any ACTS affiliated Branch that is fully established can initiate the process of starting another ACTS Branch within the immediate area of their campus.

- 1.2 The National Chaplain must be informed before the commencing of the intended action.
- 1.3 The National Executive must be kept abreast about all the developments leading up to the formation of the new Branch.
- 1.4 The National Chaplain shall inform the Diocese of the establishing Branch.
- 1.5 The National Executive, after consultation with the National Patron and the National Chaplain shall recognize a Branch provided that:
 - a) There is a person who shall assume the role of being a Branch Chaplain for the establishing institution.
 - b) Any Branch being established will have to make an application for recognition to the National Executive Committee thirty (30) days before the Annual National Conference.
- 1.6 Applications for recognition should be accompanied by:

- a) A letter from the Diocese or Parish as proof of the Branch's link with the Church
- b) The Annual National Conference has the powers to recognize a Branch and/or accept or reject any Branch's application for recognition.

SECTION FOUR: ACTS NATIONAL FINANCIAL POLICY

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Type of an organization: Association of Catholic Tertiary Students is a non-profit organization.
- 1.2 Financial Year: 1 July to 30 June

2. FINANCIAL SECRETARIATE

- 2.1 It consists of the President, Secretary General, Treasurer General, National Chaplain, and the Arch/Bishops.
- 2.2 They are the only signatures of bank accounts of ACTS
- 2.3 They are the approvals of any transaction or money use.
- 2.4 The Treasurer General's signature should be part of any transaction at all times and other signatures will be determined by their availability.

3. AFFILIATIONS AND

SUBSIDIES 3.1 AFFILIATIONS

- 3.1.1 Every ACTS Branch shall pay affiliation fees every year

- 3.1.2 Affiliation fees are as NEC determined.
- 3.1.3 Affiliation fee(s) shall be as determined by the NEC and should be paid before or by the 31st May of each year after.
- 3.1.4 Any Branch which has not yet paid affiliation fees by the set date of the Annual National Conference shall pay full cost of the conference and further forfeit their right to vote.
- 3.1.5 Affiliation fees shall all be deposited into one account, ACTS account and no other account.

3.2 SUBSIDIES

- 3.2.1 Fully affiliated Branches will be subsidized for conferences as a group not as individual Branches, at the discretion of the NEC.
- 3.2.2 Branches on observer status is not subsidized as they do not pay affiliation fees.

4. PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

- 4.1 Provincial Executive Committees are not funded by the NEC.
- 4.2 Task of the Provincial Representatives within the NEC is funded by ACTS National.
- 4.3 Task of the Provincial Representatives within the Provincial Executive Committee is not funded by the NEC.
- 4.4 Exception when an important meeting cannot take place because there is no money, a minimal amount would be given at the discretion of the NEC.

5. INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1 They are established to ensure that:

- i. Financial transactions approved by an authorized individual (i.e. Treasurer General) and are consistent with the laws and regulations.
 - ii. Assets are safeguarded i.e. account book or bank book should only be in the Treasurer's or Chaplain's possession.
 - iii. Accounting records are complete, accurate and maintained on the accrual basis.
- 5.2 The maintenance of the internal control functions are the responsibility of the following officers:
- i. Authorization of requisitions, bank accounts and preparation financial reports: Treasurer.
 - ii. Approval of annual operating budget and maintenance of accounting records:
Financial Secretariat.
- 5.3 Reconciliation should be performed quarterly on all liabilities, banks and control accounts.

6. ACCOUNTS SYSTEM

6.1 The financial transactions are recorded by the Treasurer. The details recorded on the system are maintained and specified in the general ledger are:

- i. Date of transaction, Details of transaction, Name, Transaction amount, One set of orders, etc.

7. RECEIPTING AND ACCOUNTING FOR INCOME PROCEDURES

7.1 Remittances via bank are processed directly to the relevant entity or account or person.

7.2 Income in respect of donations and payments etc. Must be made to the ACTS account.

7.3 No bank account shall be separately established, only two bank accounts shall be

used, one for the Treasurer and another for Chaplains.

8. SPECIFIC CONTROLS

8.1 INVOICES AND CLAIMS

- i. Compare the details on invoice with the requisition.
- ii. Where invoice is paid attach a tally slip.
- iii. Record invoice and mount
- iv. The documents should be scrutinized for completeness, genuineness and correctness.

9. FUNDRAISING

- 9.1 Fundraising should be done in conjunction with the SACBC

- 9.2 All fundraising on National, Provincial and Branch level have to go through the National Office to be scrutinized for validity.

10. ANNUAL AUDIT

- i. Accounting records should be annually audited by the public.
- ii. The scope of audit includes all financial transactions of ACTS accountants.
- iii. When auditors express an opinion on the financial statements an annexure of such undertaking is required
- iv. For this requirements to be met NEC should ensure that all documents and supporting receipts are obtained with payment request.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

**MODALITY
AND
METHODOLOGY OF REFLECTION**

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

MODALITY AND SPIRITUALITY OF ACTS

MODALITY

The Association of Catholic Tertiary Students (ACTS) is a student-driven faith community within the Church of South Africa located within the Catholic Chaplaincies of the Universities. Together with the Chaplaincies the students are continually challenged to develop a student spirituality by 'discerning the signs of the times'. The development of programmes and activities should, in fact, emerge as responses to the identified 'signs of the times'. In this way ACTS at all levels, nationally, provincially and Branch, will remain relevant.

SPIRITUALITY

The spirituality of continually discerning the 'signs of the times' challenges ACTS to reflect on the local context and, from this reflection, to develop meaningful responses. In this way ACTS is in line with the suggested spirituality of the International Movement of Catholic Students. The invitation to reflect and respond is an attempt to be in continual dialogue with the living God, a living God who is always speaking to the individual and to the community – refer to **1 Samuel 3:1 – 18**.

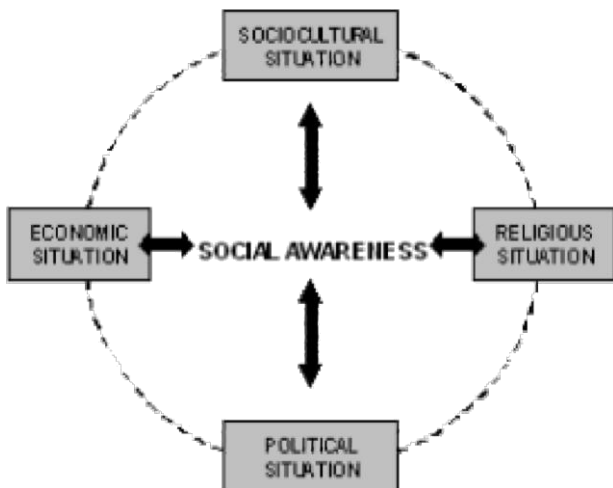
An ACTS Branch can see itself as a 'holy space' in which the living God, through the Holy Spirit, is continually challenging and waiting for responses. In this way young Catholics are given a space to express and formulate their lives in a meaningful way to themselves.

METHODOLOGY OF REFLECTION - PASTORAL CYCLE

Fr. Gabriel Afagbegee, svd

The youth of the Church do not exist or live in isolation from their socio-cultural, economic, political and religious environment or contexts. They are part and parcel of the society in which they live. Thus they cannot and should not close in on themselves being unconcerned about what goes on in the wider community around them. For our youth to genuinely live out their Christian calling, they have to be inserted into, and engage the society in which they are and are part of. They therefore have to become socially aware and interested in the sociocultural, socio-economic and socio-political situations of their environment -

village, town, city or country (and the world at large) just as they are or are expected to be interested in religious matters or situations. Thus they are expected to be in the position to reflect on and respond adequately to issues, challenges and/or problems of their life situations from the perspective of faith as Christians and specifically as Catholics. These four situations of life are not independent of each other. Rather they are interconnected, interrelated and interdependent as illustrated below.



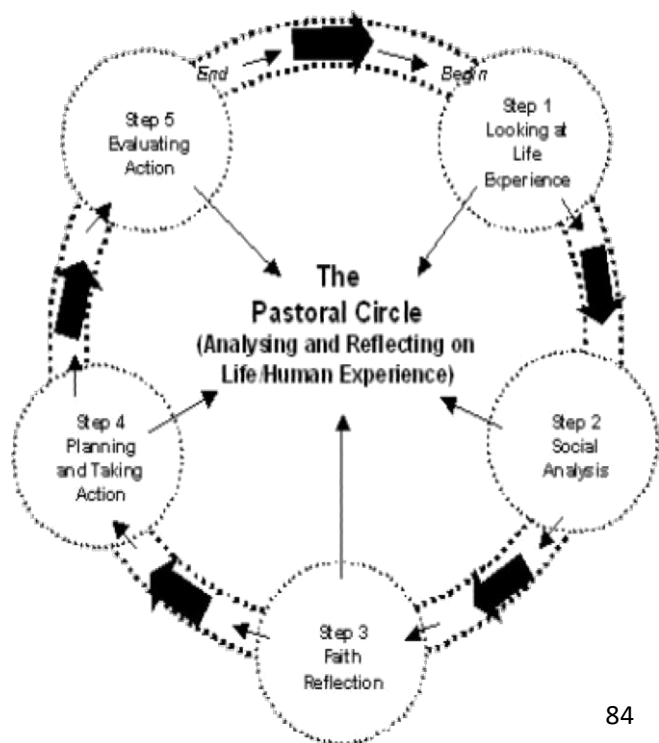
But the question is how can they (the youth) do such analysis of their concrete life situations and respond adequately to the challenges that face them? And how are you chaplains assisting them or can / should assist them in their efforts?

To be in a position to reflect on and go through a process of systematic analysis of their concrete life situations in an integrated and consistent manner, I think the youth could be introduced to the concept and practice of the Pastoral Cycle. This is a method that would help them respond skilfully and effectively to issues, challenges and/or problems of life in accordance with God's Word and in light of their faith.

The Pastoral Circle is a process of five steps of insertion, analysis, reflection, planning and taking action, and evaluating the action taken as illustrated below.

As can be seen in the illustration, at the heart of the process of the five steps (of the Pastoral Cycle) is the concrete life/human experience, which is the, centre,

the point of reference or the starting point of what takes place in the process - thus the arrows from each step pointing towards the centre. It is the concrete human experience that forms the basis of the reflection and analysis hence the first step (as explained below) is that of insertion into the situation/experience.



1. Looking at Life Experience

This is not looking at life experience in a superficial way (merely as an outsider) but rather insertion (being able to enter) of the community into the concrete/particular human situation or experience that is the focus or purpose for reflection and discussion. It involves:

Asking the question: What is going on?

Identifying the issues; i.e., clearly seeing what the issues are.

Researching the issues; i.e., investigating the issues and gathering as much information as possible about them.

2. Social Analysis

Having been inserted into the situation and asking the relevant questions, plus gathering enough

information on the situation, the community now begins to look critically at the issues by:

Analysing them to understand why they exist and understand their root causes and

Asking the questions: Why is this happening? What or who is responsible for its happening?

3. Faith Reflection

The community engaged in this process of the pastoral cycle is a community or person of faith. That is, what has brought and holds them together (as a community) is their faith in the Risen Lord. Thus their looking at, and analysis of the human experience is from the perspective of their faith (looking at what the Scriptures and (Social) Teachings of the Church say about the issues) and

Asking the questions: Lord what do you say about the issues? How would you want us to respond as a faith

community so that whatever action/s we take portray us as your witnesses?

4. Planning and Taking Action

Having listened to the Lord in prayer for guidance as to what and how he would want them to response to the issues as his witnesses, the members of the community now proceed to plan how exactly they would act. They decide on specific actions needed to reach their objective (all in the light of the message of Christ). In planning they are guided by questions such as:

- i. Where have we come from? (What is the situation we have been examining?)
- ii. Where are we right now? (Having analysed the situation and reflected on it in the light of faith, how do we now see the situation?)

- iii. Where do we want to be at? (In the light of our faith, based on Scripture and the Church's teachings what are we being called to do in response to the situation to bring about transformative change?)
- iv. How are we going to get there? (What specific actions/steps should we take in order to bring about the transformative change?)

5. Evaluating the Action

It is not enough to plan and take action. Also important and necessary in the pastoral circle is evaluation of whatever actions/steps have been taken to effect the transformative change. This would entail: Assessing the success and/or failure (the outcomes) of the action taken and learning from them (especially for the purpose of avoiding mistakes in the future).

The evaluation does not end the process but leads back to further insertion, analysis etc. In this sense, the process is not a circular but a spiral one.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

OFFICE OBLIGATIONS FOR ACTS LEADERS

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

The Chairperson (*Be it at PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Be a Chief Executive Officer of ACTS.
3. Be a full-time student.
4. Represent ACTS in external affairs, where this is not possible the BEC or PEC will decide who will represent ACTS from the executive.
5. Maintain regular contact with other executive members, in order to ensure that constant, effective reflection as well as execution of duties takes place.
6. Deliver a speech as a way of opening provincial or Branch gatherings, where this is not possible, they PEC or BEC may appoint any member to perform such a duty.
7. In consultation with the Provincial or Branch Chaplain have powers to take emergency

- decisions which are in the interest of ACTS and have to be ratified by the rest of the PEC or BEC.
8. Be responsible for the application of principles, policies and goals of ACTS.
 9. Preside over all meetings of the PEC or BEC and chair the Annual General Meeting.
 10. Resolve conflicts within the committee.
 11. Ensure that a good faith is instilled in the members of the committee.
 12. Provide feedback from a higher level meetings or external ones as a representative of the association.

The Secretary (*Be it at PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Be a Chief Administrative Officer of ACTS at a provincial or Branch level.
3. Keep all records of ACTS at a concerned level.

4. With the Chairperson be the overseers of all assets of ACTS.
5. Together with the Chairperson convene PEC or BEC meetings and set the agenda thereof.
6. Co-ordinate the activities of the PEC or BEC members at all levels.
7. Head the policy (guidelines) formulation department of ACTS that ought to be in line with the National Constitution of the association.
8. Present a secretariat report in conjunction with the Chairperson on the activities of ACTS at the Annual General Meeting.
9. In an event where the Chairperson is not present, be the acting Chairperson, not unless there is a Deputy Chairperson.
10. Ensure a smooth transfer of all the records of ACTS to the next PEC or BEC.

The Treasurer (*Be it at PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Be responsible for the initiation and coordination of fund raising activities of ACTS with the Projects Officer or the Secretary for Media and Publicity under the supervision of the provincial or Branch chaplain.
3. Ensure a smooth transfer of all financial records to the next PEC or BEC.
4. Present a budget annually in consultation with the PEC or BEC as well as the Provincial or Branch Chaplain.
5. Together with the Secretary assist in writing proposals for funding and/or sponsorship.

The Secretary for Media and Publicity (*Be it at PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Be the Chief Information Officer and be responsible for promoting ACTS in media related activities internally and externally.
3. See to the publication of *ACTionS*.
4. Ensure that the positions, policies and principles of ACTS are well reflected in the press and public.
5. Certify that members of the association are aware of the policies and how they may be implemented.
6. Be the Deputy Secretary of the committee.

The Alumnae Officer (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Establish, encourage and maintain good relations between ACTS members and ACTS associate-members.
3. Maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive database of ACTS alumni at a given province or Branch.
4. Keep alumni informed and connected to ACTS through comprehensive communication and social media.
5. Identify and assist members who did not complete their studies.
6. Together with the Chairperson, co-ordinate and facilitate activities/projects involving alumni as proposed by the PEC or BEC.

The Liturgy and Evangelization officer (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a confirmed Catholic.
2. Ensure that members practice and incorporate their Catholic Faith with their *ACTionS* as the ACTS slogan suggests, "Faith in Action".
3. Bring more understanding and insight as to why things are done the way they are done in the Catholic Church, in a border spectrum.
4. Recruit (in conjunction with the PEC or BEC) people in a manner that supports and respects the teachings of the Catholic Church.
5. Oversee the bigger picture of the Catholic Liturgy at Provincial and/or Branch level across the entire Liturgical year, by inter alia, establishing policies on matters of worship and setting goals for liturgical life of ACTS.

6. Improve members' spiritual life through reminders of different church celebrations, by among others, presenting a large number of Catholic prayers such as the Novenas, prayer sessions such as retreats and adoration.

The Academic officer (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a conformed Catholic.
2. Ensure that ACTS is known to high school learners in communities as well as youth in parishes at nearby.
3. Initiate programs that seeks to provide guidance to high school learners on their career choices.
4. Motivate tertiary students to excel and empower them through academic sessions and/or programs.

5. Facilitate academic and/or mentorship programs amongst tertiary students in groups of their academic programs and sharing of study materials.

The Social Awareness and Lifestyle Officer (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a conformed Catholic.
2. Coordinate the activities of the students in the struggle for social justice and be the voice of the voiceless based on societal dynamics that challenge Catholics as well as students at large.
3. Initiate programs that seeks to equip students, more particularly first-year students, with skills necessary to assist them deal and cope well with challenges that the university throws at them.
4. Encourage ACTS members to be part of the debates or dialogues concerning contemporary

issues within the South African context, be it political, environmental, economic and common social issues faced on an everyday basis, in light with the TRUTH as seen in the Gospel.

5. Initiate programs that seeks to afford members a platform to engage critically on contemporary issues to try and find solutions as part of discerning to the “signs of the times”.
6. Keep records of social or any event under the office events.

The Branch Revival and Synergy Creation (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a conformed Catholic.
2. Address all issues/matters affecting the province or Branch development.
3. In conjunction with the Social Awareness and Lifestyle Officer implement programs that seeks to

keep the province or Branch alive and contribute to its growth.

4. Promote cultural exchange with a view of building a dynamic and vibrant African personality in ACTS.
5. Ensure that there is stability and sustainability in all ACTS Branches at a given province.
6. In conjunction with the Social Awareness and Lifestyle Officer unite all students at tertiary level around issues of common concern and address them in the light of the truth as seen in the Gospel.
7. Monitor all ACTS Branches at a given province through visits. Where not feasible because of geographical reasons, the officer concerned may conduct a survey to monitor and track down the progress of a Branch.
8. Evaluate the progress of each Branch through Branch reports.

9. Head the recruitment drive with relevant offices to ensure the growth of the association.

The Projects officer (*Be it at NEC, PEC or BEC level*) shall:

1. Be a conformed Catholic.
2. Ensure that ACTS runs with activities which will not only benefit the association but also make a positive change to the community it finds itself within.
3. Established community based interaction-initiatives and coordinate them with relevant portfolios, be it provincial or Branch events/programs.
4. Facilitate and evaluate projects which are run to add value to the local communities and the association at large.

The International Relations, Gender and Human rights Officer shall:

1. Deal with issues pertaining to international relations, gender and human rights.
2. Initiate programs that seeks to improve the relationship between ACTS members as well as Catholics around Southern Africa, through the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS).
3. Address gender related issues and also raises awareness on occurrences which infringe on human rights.
4. Extend the knowledge on human rights to the communities in order to help reduce women and child abuse.
5. Encourage and/or recruit more international students to join ACTS in order to build relationships with people from other countries and

prevent any development of xenophobic feelings within the association. Taking into cognizance that we are an association that is based on principles of non-sexism and non-racism.

Association of Catholic Tertiary Students OATH OF OFFICE

We.....the newly elected NEC/PEC/BEC for the year , hereby commit ourselves as Catholic students to be loyal, and committed to the culture and legacy of ACTS by upholding the ACTS National Constitution and procedures of the association at all levels. We swear to remain true to our responsibilities towards the growth of the structure.

Date:

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

GENDER POLICY

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

Preamble

We, the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students, are committed in playing a part in being a platform of transformation of the Youth in Southern Africa. This transformation implies a deep-seated change that will enable all young people regardless of color, gender, race, and sex to benefit by participating in a just society where everyone has the opportunity to develop their full potential and contribute to a common good.

Introduction

2.1 What is Gender?

Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. Relations between men and women in the family, the workplace or in the public sphere

reflect society's understanding of what are appropriate behavior and characteristics of women and men. Gender therefore differs from sex in that it is social and cultural rather than biological. Gender attributes differ from society, change with time. The economy, religion, cultures and traditional attitudes shape some of these attributes.

2.2 What is gender equality?

Gender equality or equality between women and men means the equal employment by men and women of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Because what is valued differs among societies, a crucial aspect of equality is the empowerment of women to influence what is valued and share in decision making about societal priorities. Equality does not mean that men and women are the

same, but that opportunities and life chances will not depend on their sex.

2.3 Why does promotion of gender equality focus on women?

Women are mostly excluded or disadvantaged in relation to social and economic resources and decision making. Attainment of gender equality therefore has to focus on the situation of women. But both men and women have to be brought on board for effective equality to be achieved. The role of men in achieving equality implies changes for both men and women. It requires equal relationships based on a redefinition of the rights and responsibilities of women and men in all spheres including the family, workplace and society at large. The key challenge is to motivate men to become equal partners in the process of defining the strategic vision for a more equal society.

2.4 Why is gender equality an issue?

The limitation of women's access to resources and decision making limits their ability to develop and exercise their full capabilities for their own benefit and that of society. Development cannot take place if it excludes half of the human race. In working towards transformation of gender relations, the rights and responsibilities of women and men at all levels need to be redefined.

3. Contextual Situation

The struggle for Gender Equality continues to be one of the most important human rights issues in South Africa and the world. Women in South Africa were not only oppressed as blacks, they were also subject to a system of gender domination that is best described

as patriarchy, a system of male domination that was inscribed in different institutions, such as law, cultural practices and social attitudes.

Despite the achievements which have been made by various NGOs, gender equality remains a distant dream for the majority of South African women. Preliminary results of a study on Gender and the Private sector, by the Commission on Gender Equality, indicate that the South African business community shows scant interest in promoting gender equality. This is despite the country's constitution and statutory requirements obligating the private sector to address issues of inequality between men and women.

Therefore there remains the need to address the issue, and as the youth we have an important contribution to make. We need to join hands and

empower woman to challenge the system of patriarchy. In the same way that all South Africans will benefit from the transformation of South African society, men as well as women will benefit from the elimination of patriarchy and achievement of gender equality. Gender equality means that rights and responsibilities will be recognized as more equal for both men and women will have more choices and freedom to experience the range of human alternatives.

4. Goals

- 4.1 To develop a culture of human relationships and tolerance between women and men
- 4.2 To raise awareness among our membership on issues of gender
- 4.3 To develop a gender sensitive leadership

- 4.4 To move towards a popular understanding of gender equality
- 4.5 To empower men and women through information sharing about gender issues
- 4.6 For strategic involvement of women and men in the transformation of gender relations
- 4.7 For the holistic integration of gender considerations into our programs
- 4.8 To facilitate the realization of freedom and security of women as people.
- 4.9 To dispel the concept that gender issues are female issues.

5. Functions and roles

In order to achieve the objectives/goals referred to in this document, the organization:

- 5.1 Shall hold discussions to raise awareness, inform and educate which in turn will better the relations of members with the rest of the society.
- 5.2 Shall bring men aboard with gender issues through discussions.
- 5.3 Shall have a quota to ensure that there is full participation of women in leadership roles at national, provincial and Branch level.
- 5.4 Shall facilitate actual participation and active championing of gender issues by all members.
- 5.5 Shall use ACTS publication to advance the course at provincial and Branch level

6. Implementation

In the process of program development it is important to identify indicators or pointers with which to assess whether there is progress in terms of stated objectives or not.

6.1 By liaising and interacting with any organization which actively promotes gender equality.

6.2 Formation of a Gender desk at National level.

6.3 Gender officer should liaise with gender offices at provincial and Branch level to monitor the progress

6.4 Gender officer should give a quarterly report at NEC meetings on the progress of gender issues.

6.5 A task group should be elected at conference to monitor and investigate cases brought forward and give advice to the Branches where necessary.

6.6 The duties of the task team shall be to investigate any gender-related issues of its own accord or on receipt of a complaint and shall endeavor to resolve any dispute or rectify any act or omission

by mediation, conciliation or negotiation as laid down in the National Constitution.

7. Glossary of terms

It is important for readers to have an understanding of what the concepts used in this document refer to.

7.1 Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. Relations between men and women in the family, the workplace or in the public sphere reflect society's understanding of what are appropriate behavior and characteristics of women and men. Gender therefore differs from sex in that it is social and cultural rather than biological. Gender attributes differ from society, change with time. Some of

these attributes are shaped by the economy, religion, culture and traditional attitudes.

- 7.2 Gender awareness refers to a state of knowledge of the differences in roles and relations of women and men, and how this results in differences in power relations, status, privileges and needs
- 7.3 Gender equality or equality between women and men means the equal employment by men and women of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Because what is valued differs among societies, a crucial aspect of equality is the empowerment of women to influence what is valued and share in decision making about societal priorities. Equality does not mean that men and women are the same, but

that opportunities and life chances will not depend on their sex.

7.4 Gender issues are revealed when the relationships between men and women, their roles, privileges, status and positions, are identified and analyzed. Gender issues arise where inequalities and inequities are shown to exist between people purely on the basis of their being female or male. The fact that gender and gender differences are socially constructed is itself a primary issue to deal with.

7.5 Gender sensitive refers to the state of knowledge of the socially constructed differences between women and men, including their different needs, and use of such knowledge to identify and understand the problems arising from these

differences and to act purposefully to address them.

7.6 Patriarchy a system of male authority that oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions, and is based on beliefs of men's superiority that gives them decision-making power.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

PROGRAM

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the National youth structures in South Africa we have been called upon to take a stance regarding the National Youth Service program as proposed by the National Youth Commission (NYC).

The organization is founded on the principle that our Faith should manifest itself into action, and as Catholic students we realize the need to contribute towards processes aimed at re-building our country. We are conscious of the fact that these processes would, more often involve and demand vigilant action from the youth as this remains one of the most important age groups in South Africa today.

Accordingly, this submission presents our position as an organization on the service program as deliberate upon in our 1998 Leadership Conference. ACTS supports the intended program as it is reflected

below, however, there are issues, which we feel the Commission needs to seriously look into as the process is in motion.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE PROGRAMME

2.1 Creating a Culture of Development

The history of our country inform us that the youth of South Africa has remained the most affected group to apartheid. This history therefore puts pressure on us to ensure that development of the youth takes place. ACTS acknowledges the fact that the program has the potential of bringing about an impact on development of the Youth in this in the sense that we will be directly involved in re-erecting this nation. This development is also tied with the whole question of

creating a culture of responsibility, which because of our history, seems to be lacking.

2.2 Developing a culture of ploughing back into community

The program is also supported because it appears to be “two-way stream” that is, both the community as well as the participants in our case young people who have just graduated stand to benefit from the service.

Firstly, it is believed that as graduates we owe something to our communities, that there exists a duty on our part to utilize the skills that we have gained from the various Institutions of Higher Learning. Through this, we would be contributing to the attempts aimed at enhancing the value system in our country.

Furthermore, tertiary students stand a chance of gaining relevant work experience from the program as it would be a hands-on approach where theory is encompassed with practical experience which often appears to be a hindrance when young people are looking for employment. In a way the initiative could assist in fighting the “experience factor” which is always mentioned by the employment sector.

Also there is the question of one identifying with the current socio-economic trends in the country. Partaking in such a program would assist the participants to develop some level of awareness among themselves about the issues that are of concern in our societies. Hence, as an organization we believe that the service would lay the foundation for the re-creating the culture of a responsible young people.

2.3 Redressing areas of marginalization

An inescapable truth about South Africa is that the country still has communities which are less advantaged than others where real development, which ought to be people centered remains a necessary condition for the country's economic growth. As a means of contributing our efforts in re-dressing the situation the program would have to be deliberately based towards specific areas in our country for instance, rural areas as well as townships.

3. ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 Relevant Field of Study

The organization is of the view that the success of the program rests, inter alia, on its being based or specifically focused on each and every participant's

own field of study. This view is based on our belief in a holistic approach to development, which wants to ensure that at the end of the day everyone involved in the program would have something to gain out of it.

3.2 Loans Repayment

The Commission needs to take into cognizance the fact that there are students who are financing their studies through loans from the government for instance. TEFSA as well as loans from private institutions for instance, banks. The main bone of contention here is that the Commission would have to accommodate the needs of needs of these students before it even considers to put the service into practice bearing in mind that where loans are involved, whether from the government or from the

private sector there the whole issue of interest is accruing.

3.3 An Integrated Approach

Furthermore, the commission would have to consider whether in the early or in advance stages of the program, making the service part and parcel of each and every student's Degree or Diploma. This would mean that the service would be integrated into ones academic period and therefore students would not have to be involved in the service after they have finished their studies rather the service would be a component of their studies.

3.4 Incentive during the Service

The issue of incentives remains as another bone of contention in that, in as much as the organization is

aware that it is not necessary to demand a salary out of the service because we would be building our own communities, there remains as an issue whether the participants would get some form of a living allowance to cover the necessary and basic cost of living for the duration of the service.

This is also tied with the view that a stable work location or environment has to be in place. That is, the organization is convinced that for the participants to feel that they are part of what they are involved in, it is important to consider the notion that one would have to be located in one particular area for the duration of their service to the community.

3.5 Option of Military Service

We noted as an organization that military service used to be a compulsory program in South Africa

under the apartheid regime and that it was more of a tool used to further divide the people of South Africa (the youth in particular) as it was discriminatory. Now that era of statutory segregation is behind us, there are fresh opportunities to initiate the programs that would serve to bring the people together under new patriotism. It is within this context that the Commission would have to look into the possibility of making military service as one of the Youth Service Program.

4. OTHER POINTS TO PONDER

- i. There are other points that the organization would want to see the Commission dealing with and these include:
 - Where would we place those students who drop-out of their institutions considering that they would not be regarded as graduates; the Commission would

have to find a way of dealing with this issue since it is one of the main problems currently facing students in institutions of Higher Learning.

- ii. The issues of foreign students, especially those from Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) some of whom are entitled to scholarships in the country and who stand a chance of getting employment inside the country.
- iii. The issue of married couples as well as students who get pregnant during their studies. What is at stake here is how do we propose to deal with such students who already have other commitments that are over and above the normal family support that students offer once they get employment.

ACTS

**ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC
TERTIARY STUDENTS**

AFRICAN CHURCH POLICY

NMCS SOUTH AFRICA

National Movement of Catholic Students

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1. Preamble

We, the Association of Catholic Tertiary Students, are committed in playing a major role in the development of the local Church in Africa. As Youth, we shall be the Church of tomorrow and it is up to us to contribute towards the building up of that Church.

2. Contextual Situation

The Church is called to respond to the signs of the times and to become the Kingdom of God on earth. For a long time the Church in Africa has not been of Africa but rather of a foreign culture. With the full appreciation of the Gospel and Eucharist, we as the youth now wish to conceptualize our experience of God. It is a certain pleasure to experience our common Savior within our diversity. The Church calls us to become new men and new women who have a vision for the Church in Africa. This vision should be community based and Christ-centered.

1. Our Vision of the Church in Africa

- a. ACTS aspires to create an inclusive Church - free from all prejudices - where everyone in Africa feels comfortable to worship together.
- b. The Church should be constructed on human relationships and rooted in the deep Christian history where our actions within these relationships are guided by love and compassion.
- c. The Church should reflect the realities of the people in Africa and should continue to discern and react to the signs of the times.
- d. As Youth we are called to be agents of ensuring people are brought together

4. Mission of the Church in Africa

- 1 As a diverse people, we are all brought together at Holy Mass as one people worshipping one God. Through this communion with each other, we should be brought together. The liturgy is an important aspect of this but it should not end there. The charismatic nature of the African Liturgy should not cloud our focus while at Mass, and at all times the mystery of the Real Presence of God in the Blessed Sacrament should be the reason why we gather and celebrate.

- 2 We should engage ourselves in dialogue on what we mean when we say we want to build an African Church. How does one build? What is African? Who is the Church?

- 3 Through the transition from a Modern to a Post-Modern age, we must ensure we have a common mindset and understanding of what

we are about. Our life experiences should be shared so that we can collectively learn from each other. This will help create communities among us.

- 4 We must acknowledge the differences and rifts that exist between us and in ourselves and through Christian reflection and Gospel values, work towards resolving these issues by asking what would Jesus do?

- 5 We recognize that to maintain a relationship with God and other people, one needs to know oneself. We commit ourselves to a journey of self-discovery, self-acceptance and self-possession so that we can deepen and extend our relationship with our peers and God.

6 The Chaplains are our link to the Church and as such their role can never be underestimated nor undermined.

The challenge remains that we must continually ask ourselves if our actions are guided by the Holy Spirit.