

LCCL NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 18: February 2022

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others.

Matthew 20:28

From the President's desk

On 05th March 2022, it will be a full 2 years since the first reported case of Covid-19 was recorded in the Republic and a state of disaster declared on 15th March 2020. Measures to contain the spread of the virus were put in place which included closure of schools and travel restrictions which culminated in a national [lockdown^{\[1\]}](#) which started on 27th March 2020. The first local death from the disease was reported on 27 March 2020.^[2]

2 years down the line, we have 3,648,968 total cases as at 16th February 2022 with 97,520 total deaths. On 17 February 2021, the national [COVID-19 vaccination program^{\[3\]}](#) was officially rolled out. To date 31, 072, 712 doses have been administered with 20, 427, 730 being totally vaccinated and 17, 380, 606 being fully vaccinated.^[4]

Lest we forget, South Africa had four waves of covid 19 infections with the third wave proving to be more deadlier than the first 2. The health system was described as beyond its breaking point, with insufficient beds and barely enough oxygen. The recent fourth wave driven by the Omicron variant which proved to be highly transmissible did not have as devastating an effect as its predecessor, Delta. A sub-variant of Omicron known as BA.2 has been discovered and is said to be spreading rapidly in South Africa. This appears to be even more transmissible than the original variant. At the end of January 2022, 80% of infections were due to this subvariant. However, it is said to be mild in comparison to previous variants. We must not jump and down as yet with excitement and think we are out of the woods. With winter approaching, there is anticipation for a fifth wave.

With the current trajectory presented by Omicron, Cabinet has made changes to isolation rules. People with symptoms need to isolate for 7 days, and those without symptoms do not need to isolate. After 15th March, the country will no longer be under the state of emergency. It is also said that in six months' time, many countries will have made the transition from pandemic to endemic, which means, we will now live with the virus like we do with the common cold. But this doesn't mean masks will be a thing of the past. There might be a need for a fourth and maybe a fifth booster shot to keep Covid at bay until such time that more effective vaccines are developed.

Be that as it may, the road ahead with regard to Covid remains uncertain. It is important for us to remember to continue exercising caution in our communities as this does not mean that Covid-19 is no longer there. So continue Masking up, Washing up, Jabbing up and getting your booster shots.

Sr Nkhensani Shibambu CSA, President LCCL(SA)

1. Catholic Care for Children (CCC) Landscape Assessment

For the last 10 months, the Executive has been engaged in a process meant to facilitate the initiation of a landscape assessment (research) into Catholic Care for Children (CCC) in the country. The purpose of this landscape assessment is:

- To provide data about:
 - Religious life in South Africa;
 - Catholic care for children in South Africa and in general
 - Contextual factors affecting care for children in South Africa
 - Best practices for childcare
- To establish what services are rendered to children and their families in these childcare facilities;
- To identify resources for the implementation of family and community-based approaches to care for children and their families.
- To make recommendations on how CCC can be implemented in the South African context.

Based on our September 2022 newsletter, we would like to give you further updates on the project.

A steering committee comprised of 7 members has been established:

- Sr Nkhensani- President
- Sr Thao – Secretary General
- Sr Mary McActeer – Executive member
- Sr Cathy Murugan HF
- Sr Cheryl Anne HC
- Ms J Mohlouwa (Social Worker)
- Ms D Van der Spuy (Social worker)

The committee has had several meetings and will be responsible for amongst other things - Exploring how the study is going to be implemented; selecting researchers to conduct the study; giving technical guidance to the researcher/s; reviewing and approving the inception report, data collection plan, data analysis plan and field report; Provide technical inputs, support and advice to the researchers on an ongoing basis; Approve the final report as a satisfactory report that fulfils the agreed inception report.

The GHR foundation, which is an organisation responsible for the funding of the project, has given the LCCL a grant to conduct this landscape assessment on Catholic Care for Children. On 06 December 2021, Break The Chains (BTC) Development Services was the recommended research company to conduct this landscape assessment on Catholic Care for Children and they were appointed on 11 February 2022.

Currently BTC is conducting desktop reviews of what information is there on child care in South Africa in preparation for the fieldwork. As soon as this is done, they will engage in the fieldwork which would require your cooperation. This means that they will be in contact with you to establish if you have child care facilities or are involved in some form of child care in your respective areas. They will visit your centres and conduct interviews with yourselves and members of staff at your facilities and where possible, with children so as to collect data for the study. A letter of introduction will be sent to you before they conduct fieldwork.

The landscape assessment will take the form of a rapid assessment which means that it will be over a short period of time. The anticipated life span of the study will be 3 months from the date of the signing of the contract.

After the study, LCCL members will be required to convene so as to discuss the results and recommendations of the study and discern the question as to when reading the signs of the times, how are we called to move forward with efforts to advance the CCC vision? If consensus is reached to move ahead, GHR Foundation will provide support to LCCL to develop and implement initial phases of a CCC plan.

To get the study going, we would like to have a list of all those Religious institutes within the conference that have a charism of care or mission to care for children and other vulnerable persons. The Secretariat will get in touch with you to update and verify information that is in our database.

To assist the researchers with their fieldwork, we need to get additional members from your congregations or staff in your care facilities who can make part of the steering committee. Their role will be to assist the research team with language (interpretation) where necessary and to accompany the researchers to the different facilities in a particular area.

We kindly need you to assist and cooperate with the research team to help us improve the care for children in South Africa.

2. Conversation on the LGBTQIA+

It has been two years since this issue raised its head in our AGM. After much deliberation and reflection on the matter, a decision was made to have a conversation on the subject. The conversation will be facilitated by a Canon Lawyer and two Moral Theologians – one on social ethics and the other on sexual ethics. The three are currently

lecturers at St John Vianney Seminary. The seminar will be both physical and virtual. The conversation will be themed: **LGBTQIA+: opportunity or challenge? A conversation on the teachings of the Church.**

Those who are in the Joburg vicinity are invited to attend **physically at our LCCL offices at St Vincent's School for the Deaf in Rosebank.** If you choose this mode, **kindly confirm your attendance with the secretariat by 25th February 2022** to assist with logistical arrangements as places are limited. You are all invited to take heed and participate in this important conversation that will help guide us formulate our formation and recruitment policies given the diverse range of sexualities and gender identities out there. This session is open to Major superiors/ their councils as well as those responsible for formation.

The details of the conversation are as follows:

- Date: **04 March 2022**
- Time: **10am-1pm**
- Mode: **Physical & Virtual** (a link will be sent closer to the time).
- Presenters: Fr Sbu Sithathu; Fr Sello Maboea; Fr Tebello Moeti

3. Covid 19 stats

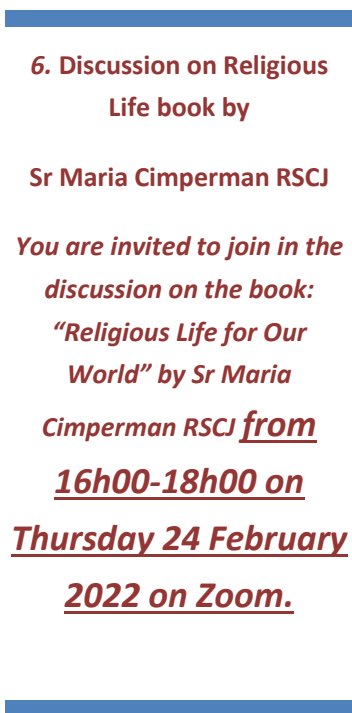
We note that the fourth wave visited a lot of our communities with a surge in infections. We would therefore like to remind you to kindly submit all the information on Covid 19 infections, deaths and or recoveries to LCCL office on a monthly basis. We continue praying for each other's safety and healing.

4. Annual subscriptions

Thank you to all those members who have paid their 2021 and 2022 subscriptions. If you haven't paid, you are gently reminded to make contact with the LCCL secretariat to settle your account.



5. Learning for Humanity Courses
LCCL Members are invited to register to online courses on Health Care Management (12 weeks) start dates: 28 February 2022 and Leadership (8 weeks) start dates 4 April 2022. Please check the L4H webpage at www.medicinesforhumanity.org/L4H to register.



6. Discussion on Religious Life book by Sr Maria Cimperman RSCJ
You are invited to join in the discussion on the book: "Religious Life for Our World" by Sr Maria Cimperman RSCJ from 16h00-18h00 on Thursday 24 February 2022 on Zoom.

Sr Thao Phi FMM (Secretary General)

Leadership Conference of Consecrated Life South Africa: lcclsa@mweb.co.za: www.lcclsa.co.za