

A NINE-DAY PILGRIMAGE UP NORTH:

PINELANDS TO PORT NOLLOTH literally

Mario and I are both from the Northern Cape. Mario's Afrikaans is more polished than mine. He's fluent. I'm stodgy, like *pap*. Mario is also savvier and could take us into unexpected places, to the heart and into the homes of people where God met us anew.



The road to Port Nolloth. We are so near Steinkopf, Mario's hometown

As the pilgrimage progressed, it touched my heart and soul immensely: The fragrance and colour of the soil from which one is born, the vast expanse of sky – heaven – meeting earth, has a way of putting you together again. Putting you and the world into holy perspective. Helping you to remember. The pilgrimage was an anamnesis.

We were not armed with an agenda, except to sit closely with those we met, lay and ordained alike. We met around the altar of the Lord, sharing in a simple Eucharist or Evening Prayer. Sitting close to one another, like one does in a masjid (so that the devil has no opportunity to come

between us).

It was a time of being together with our beloved, hardworking clergy and people of the furthest reaches of the Diocese. To listen, learn from, and come alongside one another in meaningful ways. To enter into the homes of some of the most vulnerable of our parishioners – be they young or old.



To learn to love them better, and to allow ourselves to be loved back by them. Blessing is always multidirectional, with many arms.

My heart remains 'broken' (in good ways) by this experience. Profoundly blessed.

An 'epiclesis' does not only happen in a Eucharist, at an altar, but in the hallowedness and nourishment of ordinary communities and people. In the silences, witness and wonders of nature – *the holy whole* – that enfolds and sustains us like a good mother.

I also want to express our heartfelt gratitude to Archdeacons Valiant, Paul and Tommy for making our many meetings, experiences and encounters possible. And to our beloved clergy.



The Archdeaconry of Namaqualand North



The Archdeaconry of Namaqualand South

Thank you for working so hard and for caring for those, lay and ordained, in your charge.



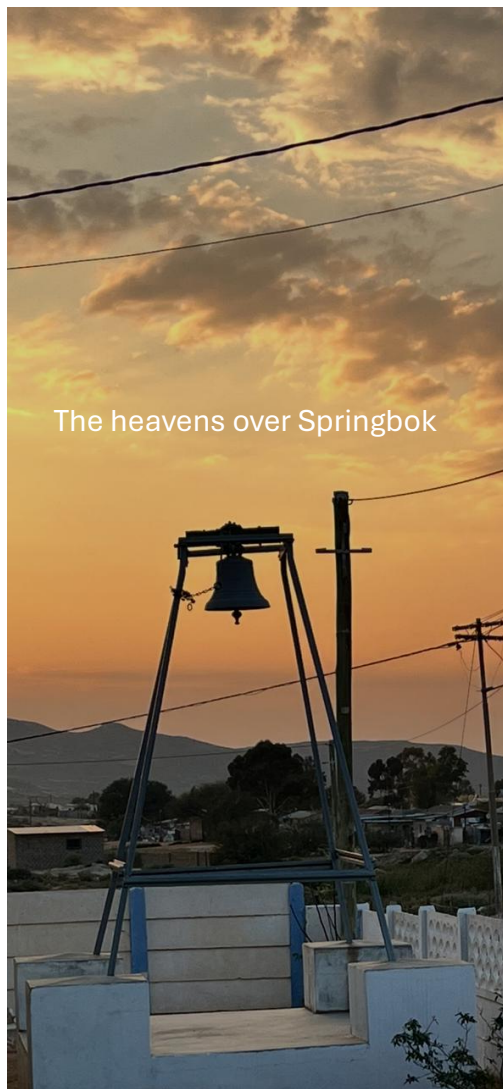
The Archdeaconry of the West Coast



We end now with words from Mario, child of Steinkopf, and man of God:

This was one of the most humbling experiences in my ministry and my life. This 'pilgrimage' through the most rural parts of our beautiful Diocese has opened my eyes to see that we do not bring

God to God's people, but we are found, reshaped and remade by God in the homes and communities of God's beloved.



The heavens over Springbok

God is already there, we just had to show up. Faithfully. Humbly. Open-minded and open-heartedly.

Dit was wonderlik om net te luister na mense, om deel te word van hulle stories, om te sien dat hulle deel is van die liggaam van Christus. Dit was goed om te sien dat die kerk, die kerk is, 'n oomblik waar mense hulle seer en vreugde deel met mekaar en met die Vicar General van die Bisdom.

It was beautiful to hear people say that we belong, we matter, our stories matter. It reminded me that, there is profound dignity and hope in community.

In this period of waiting, this period of waiting for God to send us a Bishop for our Diocese, we are still here and we trust God and are hopeful.



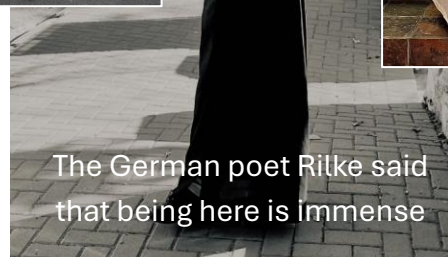
St Andrew's Hoedjies Bay



Vanaf Port Nolloth tot Saldanha was ons wonderlik ontvang. Die hartklop van die mense, die groet in die strate, die drukkies wat ons gekry het, dit het gevoel ons is tuis. In die prag van landskap, die eenvoud van plattelandse lewe, die kerk is sigbaar.

Rus and Mario

August 2026, The Month of Compassion



The German poet Rilke said
that being here is immense

Thank you for being such a beautiful part of
being here. For showing up, faithfully and
compassionately. Love without end.