

A Tribute to Ms. Lindiwe Mfethi
St Andrews Anglican Church, JHB
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16 August 2006

In the book of 1st Corinthians Chapter 2, Verse 9, it reads, “What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him”.

We never saw, heard or ever thought that, Lindiwe our comrade, dearest sister and friend could leave us and join those that exist on the plains of immortality sooner than the dawn of light on the 8th August 2006.

At 7hr42 pm on the 08 August 2006, I received an SMS which read “Lindi lies gravely critical at Wilgehuivel hospital in Honeydew. Things do not look good at all, she needs our prayers”. My response to the SMS was “Lizzy who used to work for WDB is also in ICU. I will visit both tomorrow”. At 12hr38 am I received the final SMS which read “She did not make it. She died at 10hr30pm.” Lizzy followed Lindi and passed on on the 10 August 2006.

All that had happened on that day was God hinting and preparing us for the departure of our dearest daughters.

On my last day at WDB, Lindi and my former colleagues, bought me a book by Allister Sparks titled Beyond the Miracle – Inside the New South Africa. I would like to borrow a quote in the book on Chapter eight – Of Crimes and Confessions by Alexander Solzhenitsyn which reads “By not dealing with past human rights violations, we are not simply protecting the perpetrators’ trivial old age; we are thereby ripping the foundations of justice from beneath new generations.”

Lindi was robbed of her father by the Apartheid regime and will go to her grave never knowing where he was killed, how he was killed and where he was buried. She will also go to her grave with the sadness of never being raised by her birth mother. She also lost the only mother that raised her and finally lost her brother who took his own life. Lindi never found justice in the death of her father, even through the painful process of the TRC, to a point where her mother had to request the courts to declare her father deceased to resolve matters of his estate. Only in the final days did she begin to accept the dark cloud that had hung over her young life for so long.

Today, we console ourselves and the dearly departed with the words in Corinthians that what no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him.

Lindi joined us in WDB in 2002, after the death of her mother in the Eastern Cape. We immediately recruited her because of the challenge at hand then and the fact that she had

the skills and the experience that we required. She won us a case at the CCMA and began to institutionalize the human resources function in the organization. She was very strict and disciplined. At the time, she had to balance moving to Johannesburg a fast and crazy city, a new job, her brother back home and the recent death of her mother. She juggled it well but it was never easy.

Dr. Mimie Sesoko was the CEO at the time and she had a difficult task of managing a very energetic and competitive senior management team and general staff that comprised mostly of youth below thirty years old.

In the young senior management team with Lindi we agreed, disagreed, fought and also had great times. We were there to learn but we were also there as individuals on different journeys meeting at a point of experience, growth and fundamental dedication to the continuation of the struggle against poverty and the marginalization of women in rural South Africa.

Lindi used to call me Buti, brother, as her sign of respect for me but I knew that she could differ with me and put me in my place. She could be cold and razor sharp but that's who she was.

Later she participated in the steering committee to set up a national association of pro-poor microfinance institutions. This led to the formation of the Association of Microfinance Institutions of South Africa (AMFISA). WDB was elected on the Board of AMFISA and Lindi set on the Board and was founding member of the association. On behalf of AMFISA, I would like to pass our dearest sympathies and condolences to Lindi's Family and WDB.

At the time of her passing she was the Chief Operations Manager of WDB and a Board Member of AMFISA.

Lindiwe is the fourth sister that I will be burying in three months due to HIV/AIDS. As the world meets in Canada this week to find solutions to this pandemic, we are still yet to find a cure. I hope that the lord will forgive us sooner for we can't stand another coffin in which reside those that make up our life, our community, our country.

I would like to end by borrowing a prayer from the Tibetan Book of Living and Dying and hope that Dlamini, Lindiwe Mfethi shall join us for herself in spirit and for all of us in the living:

*Dear Lord;
For as long as space exists
And sentient beings endure,
May I too remain,
To dispel the misery of the world.*

Lord make me an instrument

Of thy peace, where there is hatred,

Let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that

I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we

Are pardoned, and it is in dying

That we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

Lala Ngoxolo Ntombi!