

SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES



REMEMBER THE POOR

Arguably the greatest sin of our day is our failure to care for the poor and to deal effectively with the menace of poverty. That failure – of compassion and of justice – underlies all the other great sins of our day: war, greed, abuse, violence, drug peddling, human trafficking, environmental destruction, crime...

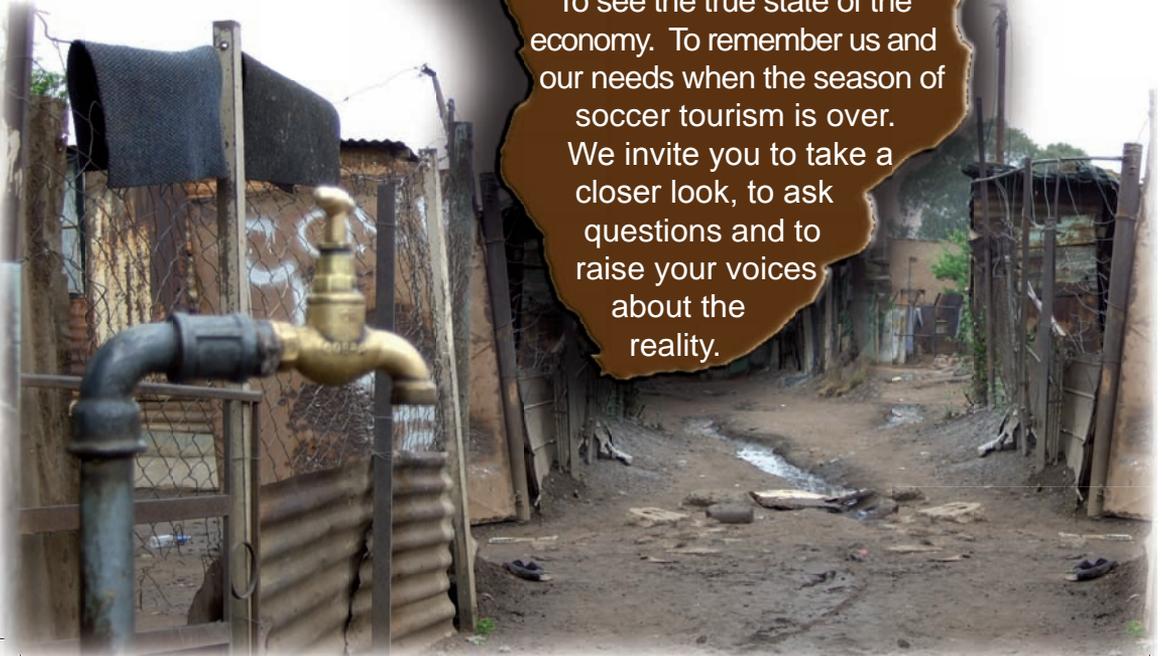
The list goes on.

God cares especially for the poor, yet we appear unconcerned.

We invite visitors to South Africa to see beyond the soccer stadiums. To see the people of South Africa, their talents and achievements – and in many cases their destitution.

To see the true state of the economy. To remember us and our needs when the season of soccer tourism is over.

We invite you to take a closer look, to ask questions and to raise your voices about the reality.



**The world over, we have the capacity
to make poverty history,
yet we are not doing it.**

In South Africa, the sin is double. Why?

- Because we speak of the struggle against apartheid, but have neither undone the harm entrenched by that system nor built the just society for which we fought.
- Because of all African countries, we have the material resources to address the scandal of poverty – yet we have allowed ourselves to become the most unequal society in the world.
- Because eliminating poverty is a stated public policy objective in South Africa, yet we are not doing as we say.
- Because we boast of our culture of ubuntu without treating others humanely.
- Because we have failed to resist the impact of globalisation on our economic life.

The Soccer World Cup may make matters of poverty worse and deepen our sin. Much of South Africa's economy runs on the basis that those with power and wealth increase their comfort by exploiting the needy: through cheap labour, land acquisition, diverting public funds into their own pockets and so forth. For all the public noise about how the World Cup will benefit this country, there are many signs that it will only benefit an elite and may deepen the destitution of many others. Some studies suggest that further attacks on the poor are simply being held over until after the excitement of the soccer and the observers have left.

We live in dangerous times and we fear for our future if we remain as divided and unconcerned as we are today.

*The South African Council of Churches spearheaded
the churches' struggle against apartheid and helped
to protect and develop many of today's leaders.
It continues to speak for the mainline historic
churches on social and justice issues.*

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