

My name is Nosizwe Mgudlwa and I was 10 years when I visited Di and

Brian's home in December 1985. We went there as a family, my mother, Zora Mehlomakulu-Mgudlwa (Trade Union Organiser), my father, aunt, cousin and brother

At the time we visited with them it had been a very sad year as I had lost my grandmother and of course it was a dark year as kids we were away of necklacing that was taking place – I was worried about my uncle who worked for the council and my aunt who was a teacher in Nyanga East.

The visit to Di and Brian's home brought so much light to my year and it would remain so for many years. Even though I cannot remember what we did as kids – I remember feeling very comfortable and extremely happy!

When I learnt that Brian and Molly Blackburn had died as result of a car accident I was moved and saddened - the adults were consumed with shock and with questions of whether it was an accident or not.

The little I remember of Brian was that he was chubby, wore shorts, some grey hair and him moving around casually around his home.

I would only shed tears over his death 30+ years after I put down the phone when Di called me some weeks ago asking if I could say something at this occasion – she acknowledged that I did not really know Brian but I belong to the younger generation and she felt that I should add a voice at the occasion.

The reason that Di had my number is that I had attended Ms Mary Burton's talk at UCT on the 12th of May 2016. Over the years I had gathered that Di was a member of the Black Sash and when Ms Mary Burton was honoured by the state - I wished to understand a bit more about the Black Sash and I had hoped to see Di at Mary's event.

I have been on a personal journey of trying to make sense of the post apartheid South African journey.

I have always believed that Reconciliation was the route to go for this country as we had a very ugly past and if we did not reconcile - we would destroy one another.

What I think I am learning is that reconciliation is a great deal of work and is certainly not the easy way out of the past that it is indeed a very high calling.

Reconciliation is a major theme in the Christian faith as I continue to grow in the faith I realise that reconciliation can be very costly. It requires patience and mercy as we all wrestle with our negative beliefs and learnings and be forgiving of stumbling with political incorrectness. We need to grapple with the notions of justice and fairness in our context given our history of injustice and unfairness against a people. Reconciliation calls upon those who have been oppressed to imagine the rearing of the oppressor while the former oppressor has to place himself or herself in the experience of the oppressed. It calls for deep introspection even if we do not like what we see and this is how we could continue

challenge ourselves. It requires the painful truth rather than the denial of the past. It allows for expression of righteous anger as suppressed anger could become violent or deadly anger.

I recall a point made by a gentleman who was part of the UDF, while not opposed to forgiveness and reconciliation he feels that a person like Madiba had a long period to do the necessary introspection and work through his anger while others had recently faced the system's brutality at the time he was calling for forgiveness and reconciliation – the others never got the opportunity to work through their anger.

In a country where there are some persistent in the racist beliefs and utterings and see it fit to use the "K" word and some seem to be embracing anti-white sentiment – I value this particular occasion when I am in a stage in my life of consolidating who I am that I commit myself to looking beyond the colour of one's skin -when my family met with Brian and Di at their home – it was not a meeting of blacks and whites - it was about people brought together and held together by a common belief in justice and equality for all.

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