

Editorial

In our last Editorial, we mentioned that as a journal, *Missionalia* is in transition towards a wider significance. In a way the recent waves of students' protests for what they consider the decolonization of Higher Education added some stimulus to this transition. In the South African context this call became a key impetus for transformation and theology students also played key roles.

While we are not primarily moved by external forces, we do need to take note what is happening around us – especially so as missiologists. The driving force should remain excellent scholarship and research, a deeper engagement with the texts as well as our contexts where we are aiming to make an impact. Scholarship is about the search for truth and how it is relevant to shape God's world. This will remain the focus of *Missionalia*, even as we transition over the next few years. We do this conscious of the fact that being rooted in southern Africa also means having a global reach.

As a concrete expression of how we keep these creative tensions together we present you the articles in this edition. It addresses the themes of worship in what the author calls, the “marginalised, yet never silenced, black African worship music”, development, the significance and the voice of Allan Boesak also for our scholarly work, and then the notion of conversions in context. In these contributions, one can sense the creative tensions and how these temper the scholarly work of the authors. Again, we want to repeat that these articles are not presented as the final word. Rather, it should be seen primarily as contributions to the larger discourses, on the decolonization of theology, research and Higher Education, on transition and transformation towards a concrete social impact. We therefore invite engagement and review articles as you engage the work here and as we all sharpen our questions and contributions. This process may continue over many months or years and our hope is that it feeds into the broader discourses. It is often said that as scholars from the African continent, we have a key contribution to make, and what we want to add is that here you have the opportunity do that in a real way. *Missionalia* is still considered to be one of the top Missiology journals worldwide and the strength of our scholarly engagement confirms that.

As another dimension of this engagement, we can announce some detail of the 15th Assembly of the International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS). It has recently been confirmed at the IAMS Executive Committee meeting that the next assembly conference is to be hosted in conjunction with Australian Association of Mission Studies over 9th-14th July 2020 in Sydney, Australia. We can also mention that the theme is, “Powers, Inequalities and Vulnerabilities: Mission in a Wounded World”. This is a relevant theme for us. It was our eminent ancestor Dawid Bosch

who reminded us often of the dangers of power and a too close relationship to the institutions of power. He also presented as alternative to the power of the gospel narrative, the notion of the vulnerability of mission, through the cross of Jesus Christ. It is our view that these insights remain relevant and may also inform the conversations in the run-up to Sydney 2020. As special edition before the assembly is planned in order for us also to prepare ourselves.

Lastly, we welcome on board, as Deputy Editor, Dr Lukwikilu Credo Mangayi. Dr Mangayi was elected and appointed at the most recent SAMS Business meeting and started his work, with much enthusiasm and wise insights on the future of Missionalia. What he brings in terms of his own journey and seasoned experience is captured in his article entitled, “Conversions in Context: Insights from an autobiographical narrative of a Congolese-born missionary at Stinkwater.” This is an important contribution and emphasizes not simply (again) the agency from us as Africans, but more so the urgency of us writing our own stories, by drinking from our own wells – from places like Klipgat and yes, Stinkwater! Decolonization is essentially about this – the affirmation and foregrounding of African scholarship as a key contribution in scholarship locally and globally and we are of the view that Dr Mangayi is called for a time such as this.

May this edition again challenge, but perhaps also, may it irritate and stir. May it spark new conversations and research agendas as we pursue our ultimate calling.

Prof RW (Reggie) Nel & Dr L (Credo) Mangayi