

Your life matters!

Since 26 March 2020 we have lost many wonderful friends and colleagues – from right around the Bay.

All their lives mattered.

Their lives mattered to their families and friends, but their lives also mattered to their communities.

They have left huge gaping holes in the fabric of the Nelson Mandela Bay society.

They were dedicated fathers and mothers, community leaders, sports people, medical staff and ministers of the Gospel.

We mourn with those that mourn and our heart breaks for the hurting families in the Bay.

Their loved one's lives really mattered to them.

They have suffered great loss.

Their loved one's lives also mattered to the community of Nelson Mandela Bay.

These were people who made a positive difference in society.

The gaps that they have left behind need to be filled.

These people will never be replaced, because they were unique – as we all are – but each one of us needs to step forward to play our role and to make a significant positive difference in our metro.

This is not the time for us to rest on our laurels, but to arise to the tasks that await us.

Each one of us has the power to make a difference.

Whether we are aware of it or not, our lives influence others

We can either be a force for good or a force for evil.

The choice is ours.

Quite often this decision is made early in life, but we have the prerogative to change.

We can use even the twilight years of our lives, for the betterment of society.

But you say: "What can I do? I have no great talent; very little ability; and few resources!"

I believe it all begins with attitude and a desire to make your life count.

Instead of standing to one side and criticising, decide to put your prejudice aside and start by treating every individual that you encounter with courtesy and respect.

In every conversation, we can either add to the downward spiral of negative talk or we can highlight those things that edify and inspire.

You ask: "What can I do?"

The gaps in our society are huge at the moment!

There are families who have lost fathers, which need men of integrity to be male role models to their sons.

If you have your own sons, include a fatherless teenager in some of your outings.

Be a father to the fatherless.

And mothers likewise, if you have just lost a female friend to Covid, include her girls in some of the activities that you enjoy with your girls.

It is not the time to be selfish. It is the time to share.

It has been a great joy to my heart to observe congregations from many different denominations and the various areas of the Bay, responding - together and in unity with great enthusiasm, dedication and hard work - to the call to serve the sick, the needy, the unemployed and the hungry.

The churches were certainly not alone in this great work.

There were NGOs, other organizations and even numbers of individuals who sacrificially laboured and gave financial help to those in distress.

Through these kind actions, the community-minded people of NMB rose to the occasion and alleviated the suffering of others by their unselfish and tireless service.

They have made their lives matter!

Again, you ask: "What can I do!"

I would say to you the same as God our Heavenly Father said to Moses: "What is that in your hand?"

Use it for the benefit others! And make your life matter!

Pastor Joan Keeling; NMB: Citywide Prayer Intercessor Network