

# First Call for Papers

## “The last shall be first”: Theological and ethical reflection on (Christian) leadership

**Dates:** Wednesday 19 June – Friday 21 June 2019

**Venue:** Padre Pio House, Pretoria

The Theological Society of South Africa, in collaboration with the Christian Leadership Cluster, will be hosting a conference on Christian leadership from 19-21 June 2019.

### The Christian Leadership Cluster

The Christian Leadership Cluster developed out of the academic co-operation between Unisa (University of South Africa) and the GBFE (Gesellschaft für Bildung und Forschung in Europa). One element of this co-operation was the facilitation of research and academic exchange between Africa and Europe and beyond. So far, we have hosted four Christian Leadership Conferences: in South Africa (2013), Germany (2014), Belgium (2016) and again in Germany (2018). Since these early days, partnerships have been formed with several other institutions.

The following include some of the publications that have resulted from this co-operation:

- Two full issues in an accredited journal:
  - *Koers – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 75:3 (2010) and
  - *Koers – Bulletin for Christian Scholarship* 79:2 (2014).
- Three books:
  - Barentsen, J; Kessler, V; & Meier, E. (eds). 2016. *Christian Leadership in a Changing World: Perspectives from Africa and Europe*. Leuven: Peeters.
  - Barentsen, J; van den Heuvel, S. and Kessler, V. (eds). 2017. *Increasing diversity: Loss of control or identity adaptive construction*. Leuven: Peeters.
  - *Metaphors for leading: Leading by Metaphors* will be published in 2019 with Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

### Background to the conference theme for 2019

“But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first (Matt 19:30) and “So the last will be first, and the first will be last” (Matt 20:16). These intriguing verses are located at the end of Jesus’ parables about the rich young man (19:16-30) and the labourers in the vineyard and the unexpected wages received by those who arrived late (Matt 20:1-16).

Not only is the world witnessing shifts in political leadership styles and issues – take for instance the election of the Trump administration in the USA, debates about Brexit in the UK, and the rise of political conservatism and populist movements across the globe – but those in leadership (political, religious and corporate) are facing unique challenges. In 2019, South Africans will vote in their national elections. Countries across the globe face a host of challenges including mass social migration, nationalistic responses to immigration policies, service delivery by political structures to communities engulfed by the effects of poverty, corruption and hedonistic leadership practices. These and other issues necessitate an in-depth discussion on the question of leadership, leadership styles and how leadership is to be exercised in increasingly challenging social environments.

Leadership is a multifaceted and complex field of study. This academic conference aims to reflect on issues such as the following:

- *What is leadership, and in which sectors is it exercised? (Sectors could include political, religious, church, economic, business, educational, environmental, cultural, non-governmental organisations or non-profit organisations, etc.).*
- *What is Christian leadership and how is it similar to or different from other forms of leadership?*
- *What should characterise genuine Christian leadership?*
- *Leadership in the Church and Christian leadership in society.*

- *What are the different styles and contexts of leadership?*
- *What constitutes authentic parental leadership in the home and community?*
- *How is power used – or abused? What constitutes dysfunctional or toxic leadership?*
- *It is valid to distinguish between leaders and followers?*
- *What role does culture play in the understanding and functions of leadership?*
- *How important are character and personality in leadership?*
- *What is meant by the formation of leaders and how does it take place?*

### Instructions for submitting proposals

Please send the title of your proposal, a short abstract of 100-200 words describing the content of the proposed paper and your personal contact details to the conference secretary at the address mentioned below. A second Call for Papers will go out in January 2019. Please note the following relevant dates in this regard:

- Final date for submission of proposals: 14 February 2019. Please send proposals to Dr Nadia Marais at [nadiah@sun.ac.za](mailto:nadiah@sun.ac.za).
- Confirmation of accepted papers and pre-final draft of the programme: 28 February 2019.
- The first full draft of the conference programme will be distributed before 15 March 2019 together with practical details on the conference. This will enable participants to seek funding to attend the conference timeously.

We are looking forward to welcoming you at the 2019 Conference in Pretoria, South Africa.

#### Please note: Possible tour

For participants from overseas, it may be possible to arrange a group visit to the Kruger National Park (situated about 420km from Pretoria) for a few days after the conference. Further information will be sent out in January 2019.

Enquiries regarding this tour must be directed to Marian Winter (and **not** to the TSSA conference organisers). You can contact Marian at: [marian.winter@gbfe.org](mailto:marian.winter@gbfe.org)

### Conference Partners:

The coming Christian Leadership Conference will be supported by nine institutions worldwide:

#### *South Africa:*

Theological Society of South Africa (TSSA) and the University of South Africa (UNISA)

#### *Germany:*

Akademie für christliche Führungskräfte (AcF) Gesellschaft für Bildung und Forschung in Europa (GBFE)

Heidelberg institute, Ingenior training and consulting

*Norway:* Norwegian School of Leadership and Theology

*Russia:* St. Petersburg Christian University (SPbCU)

*US:* North Park University, Chicago

