



## DECEMBER '22 CIRCULAR

Dear Member,

While I'm writing this letter I'm looking at the colourful Christmas decorations in display on my verandah, call it an early Christmas feeling. After a hard year's work, we might all crave a break and the festive season may just be what we need to revitalize our senses and gain new hope.

Irrespective of whether one believes in Christmas or not, the sheer excitement of children everywhere during this time is contagious and refreshing. We sense that many youngsters are looking forward to the surprise of opening gifts and the joy of cookies and ginger beer. It is truly, in the words of the old Edward Pola and George Wyle classic song, recorded by Andy Williams in the 1960's "*... the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*".

We've unfortunately found that many people nowadays tend to live in their heads (on their cell phones) and not in their bodies. They accordingly gradually withdraw from the everyday world and lose touch with mundane reality. The result is a boring artificial life that breed depression and robs us from small and random wonders that could fill us with meaning and purpose.

In the film '*Before I go*' the main character, Samantha played by Annabella Sciorra, attempts a failed suicide to escape her boredom. A fake priest 'counsels' her and advise her *to look again before she goes*. The advice appeals to her and she decides to implement it in her daily life. On her way home she comes across a lowly earth worm on the side walk, something she would have ignored before as trivial.

Consequently, in an act of 'looking again' she picks up the lost worm and places it in the adjacent flower bed, feeds it with fruit peels and left over pizza and chases a preying bird away. We as counsellors ought to know how a simple act of participation in life may sometimes trigger renewed interest and fill us with meaning and purpose that are souls may earnestly yearn for.

Thus, *before we go*, let us all endeavour to rediscover life in the simple things, engage with what existence has to offer us. Our prayer is that Christmas 2022 may provide such an opportunity to you and your loved ones.

On behalf of the staff members at the ASCHP offices and ourselves, we want to express our sincere gratitude for allowing us all to serve you during the past year. It was a pleasure.



Wishing you and yours a blessed festive season and a prosperous New Year filled with plenty of goodness.

Take note that the offices are closing on 15 December 2022 and will reopen on 9 January 2023.

Please take care and don't forget to enjoy life,

*Liezl*

Dr. Liezl and Prof Marius Herholdt