

Father Lapsley launches book in Havana



South African Priest, Michael Lapsley, launched his book *Redeeming the Past* in Havana as part of the international campaign for the release of the Cuban Five.

Lapsley, who is Vice-President of South Africa's Council of Churches, is a great friend of the Cuban people and of Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and Antonio Guerrero, who along with Fernando González and René González, who returned to the island after serving unjust sentences in US penitentiaries, are worldly known as the Cuban Five. The Cuban Five are five Cuban antiterrorists unjustly locked in US jails for 16 years for fighting terrorism against the United States and Cuba.

The autobiographical book written in cooperation with Stephen Karakashian is inspired by Father Lapsley's life, divided into four parts and one section of the third chapter is dedicated to the Caribbean island nation.

Father Lapsley is also the founder of the Cuba Friendship Association in South Africa and the First President of the Friends of Cuba Society (FOCUS) in Cape Town.

Lapsley fought against the apartheid regime, and was the victim of a terrorist action in 1990 when the South African government at the time sent him a bomb letter a week after he returned from a trip to Cuba, maiming his two hands, one eye, his timpani, and causing other injuries.

The book's prologue is by Cape Town's Emeritus Archbishop, Desmond Tutu, who expresses his admiration and respect for Father Lapsley, since, in his words, Lapsley has become a magnificent lawyer of the healing and reconciliation cause in South Africa and in other conflict areas in the world.

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