

Hello there —

meet Klaus Nürnbergger - that's me!

I sometimes think of myself as a “residual colonialist” – a Westerner dropped in Africa by birth and entangled with Africa without his consent. What am I doing here? Well, this is my home and I love it.

I am a Christian. A Lutheran. A committed ecumenist. I believe that there is only one church of Christ, but there are various gifts to serve each other and various insights to correct and enrich each other.

I am a theologian. But I also have a natural sciences and economics background. My passion has been to translate the biblical message into thought patterns of today. I work on an interdisciplinary basis.

I have been called to serve a predominantly black church in South Africa. African traditional spirituality, its interaction with modernity and the social consequences have fascinated and challenged me.

With many of my generation I have been traumatised by the agonies and conflicts produced by colonialism and apartheid. I cannot claim to have proved my worth in this regard and I am ashamed of that.

On the website you will find a list of my publications, abstracts of my major books, some *ad hoc* ‘position papers’ on various themes, chapters from recent books, and a few recent sermons.

Accept me for what I have become, will you? Here follows my life story for those who need to know more.

My life story

I was born in Swakopmund, Namibia, on the 28 Jan 1933 as the son of a farmer. After high school I was trained as an agricultural economist, obtained the degree of BSc(Agric) at the University of Pretoria in South Africa and worked briefly in the field of economic development planning. That is where my interest in economics and the natural sciences originated. Becoming aware of a calling to become a missionary, I abandoned this career.

I married Margarete (Maxi) Sieburg, a teacher from Johannesburg, in 1958. She was a travelling secretary of the Christian Students Association at the time. On the day after the wedding we departed for Germany where Maxi worked as a high school teacher and I studied theology at the Universities of Hamburg, Göttingen,

Tübingen, Münster and Marburg as well as the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey (Switzerland).

After undergoing the training of a Lutheran pastor in Germany, including the first and second theological examinations, I obtained my doctorate in Systematic Theology at the University of Marburg and became an Academic Assistant to my mentor, Prof Dr Carl Heinz Ratschow.

From 1968 to 1979 I served as an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa under the auspices of the Berlin Mission Society. From 1971-1979 I was a lecturer in Systematic Theology and Theological Ethics at the Lutheran Theological College, Maphumulo, Natal, and for the last three years also director of the Missiological Institute, Maphumulo. Maxi taught Christian Education and social studies at the same institution.

In 1978 I obtained my second doctorate in Theological Ethics at the University of South Africa. From 1980 to 1989 I was professor of Theological Ethics at the University of South Africa (Unisa). From 1989 to my retirement in 1998 I was professor of Systematic Theology and Theological Ethics at the University of Natal (now University of KwaZulu-Natal) in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Maxi, who has a Masters degree in theology and various other degrees, taught Christian Education and History of Christianity there.

I was a visiting professor in Berlin, Germany (1974/5), Sao Leopoldo, Brazil (1981), Bochum, Germany (1982) and Chicago, USA (1991). I was second on the short list for a chair in Theological Ethics at Tübingen university and called to a chair in Systematic Theology and Theological Ethics at Bochum university, which I declined in favour of continuing with my work in South Africa.

After my retirement I was granted a fractional reappointment by my University for three further years. I also chaired the Committee which was set up by two Lutheran churches and the Lutheran World Federation to establish the Lutheran Theological Institute (LTI), linked to the School of Religion and Theology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

In 2004 we moved back to Pretoria where I am continuing with my research. My wife Maxi is a voluntary worker at the Citizen's Advice Bureau in Pretoria and a U3A lecturer. We have had no children, but a lot of former students whom we learnt to love.