

# Desmond Tutu's modest car reminds South Africans of his values

Anti-apartheid hero Desmond Tutu could have chosen practically any car in the world when billionaire Warren Buffett offered to buy him a vehicle.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu laughs as crowds gather to celebrate his birthday by unveiling an arch in his honour outside St George's Cathedral in Cape Town, South Africa on 7 October 2017. *Reuters/Mike Hutchings/File Photo*

But in 2008, the archbishop picked a modest Toyota Corolla with manual transmission over the luxury BMWs and Mercedes Benz favoured by government ministers. He gave the cash left over from the U.S. investor's present to the poor.

The Desmond Tutu Intellectual Property Trust, which manages his legacy, has put the old car on show along with his books and possessions in honour of Tutu's 92nd birthday, which he would have celebrated on Saturday.

"We hope this lesson ... by the Arch about us not being tempted by opulence, by being sensitive to the least amongst us is the takeaway people (who have) seen that car will make," Trust chairperson Mamphela Ramphele told *Reuters*, referring to Tutu by his nickname.

"We cannot but keep that prophetic voice alive to remind us that we can be better, as he would tell us, that we are designed for better things," Ramphela said.

The car, displayed in Cape Town, the city where the archbishop lived for most of his later life, became a symbol of Tutu's values.

Former president Nelson Mandela, who died in December 2013, described his long-time friend as "the voice of the voiceless".

Desmond Mpilo Tutu, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his non-violent opposition to white minority rule, died in 2021.

Widely revered across South Africa's racial and cultural divides for his moral integrity, Tutu never stopped fighting for his vision of a "Rainbow Nation" in which all races in post-apartheid South Africa could live in harmony.

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