

4 000 march in protest against detention

Mercury Reporter

about 4 000 staff members and students from the University of Natal marched in protest against the prolonged detention of Durban hunger striker Sandile Thusi yesterday.

The march which started at the Cathedral Archbishop Denis Hurley and the principal of the University of Natal, Prof Peter Booysse, took place early on campus. Although there were police present, there were no incidents or arrests.

In the prayer meeting before the march, Archbishop Hurley and the detainees on hunger strike had been referred to a state of cooperation and other frustration at their prolonged detention.

By participating in the march he saw himself as trying to raise the conscience of the South African State which purports to uphold Christian ideals and principles.

Prof Booysse described detention without trial as 'a gross infringement of fundamental human rights' and made an urgent appeal for Thusi's immediate release on

behalf of the university community.

He said a letter of appeal had been sent to the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, as well as a number of other political leaders, and added he had requested the support of the other South African universities.

The letter has also been sent to presidents of universities in the United States and Canada and to vice-chancellors of universities in the United Kingdom.

Both Prof Booysse and Archbishop Hurley were part of a delegation mandated at the meeting to take a letter requesting Mr Thusi's release to Mr Vlok, via the Commissioner of Police, at the end of the march.

The delegation also included Dr Ian Phillips of the Department of Political Science, the president of the Students' Representative Council, Miss Penny McKenzie, and a representative of the Black Students' Association, Mr Simphiwe Ngobese.

Early yesterday, 31 students and academics, including Archbishop Hurley, participated in an on-campus picket.



Some of the 4 000 students and staff members of the University of Natal marching in protest against the detention of Sandile Thusi.