PRESENCE
The voice of Edmund’s people in the English Network

Love not only in words but with deeds
I am delighted to introduce our new look Network magazine called ‘Presence’.

This first edition is a great reflection of what has been an exciting term, with so many great things going on across the Network. It has been a real privilege for the team at the office to meet, work alongside, and lead sessions with so many wonderful young people and adults. There is an energy moving in our Network and we have so much to look forward to. In the Network we are called to be a compassionate presence and it is wonderful to see the responses people are making in so many areas, but in particular in homelessness, food poverty, and with asylum seekers and refugees. One recent quote from Pope Francis sets us a very clear mandate, “before all else, the Gospel invites us to respond to the God of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to see the good of others.”

May God continue to richly bless us in all we do.

We are delighted that Ann Nichols has joined the team at Woodeaves as our new Network Facilitator. Her energy and passion have added a new dimension to the work we do and she is already building great relationships across the Network.

I hope that you learn about new initiatives and opportunities available throughout the Network. It has been an honour to be able to communicate with all of the contributors and I would encourage you all to share as much and as frequently as you can, via me, with your friends and colleagues across our Network.

May you continue to love not only with words but with deeds and to be inspired by the charism of Blessed Edmund. Keep being Edmund’s people.

Ann Nichols
Editor and Network Facilitator, England
Woodeaves team visits St. Aidan’s Catholic Academy, Sunderland

As part of our INSET ‘tour’ of all the English schools, we visited St. Aidan’s on 15th November to deliver a twilight session on ‘Further Engagement with the Network’. It was an extremely positive session and the team were so impressed by all the excellent projects that take place at St. Aidan’s, and how they truly live out the Eight Essentials on a daily basis. The staff really engaged with all the opportunities the Network can offer to them and their students; in groups, staff explored how their school could further engage with these opportunities – outlining concrete plans for the year ahead. We at the Edmund Rice Office look forward to hearing how these ideas come to fruition and to providing all the support we possibly can.

Next stop on the grand tour is St. Boniface’s in Plymouth.

EREBB Leadership Certificate English schools launch event

On Monday 6th November, we launched the EREBB Leadership Certificate in Edmund Rice education to our English schools.

We were privileged to have with us, Anne O’Gara, President of the Marino Institute for Higher Education in Dublin who has overseen the creation of the on-line qualification and who so eloquently explained the modules and assessment to Heads, governors and staff from most of the schools in our Network.

The product of some three years of collaboration between experts in all Provinces, the certificate covers areas such as the background story of Edmund’s life, spiritual leadership, social justice and how Edmund Rice education is developing in institutions globally.

Reann Maguire, Director of the English Schools, also announced that the English Office will fund all Heads and Principals to complete the leadership certificate. Five staff who attended the launch evening won funding to complete their certificates via a raffle.

The next opportunity to sign up will be next term, in January 2018.


EREBB update

At the European Province EREBB meeting in October we were lucky to be joined by Brian Gareone and Wayne Tinsley from Australia. The principle points to come out of the meeting were:

Ensure our schools are aware of and take up the ‘swimming’ projects available from the EREBB website.

Improve the global identity of EREBB, the local identities are stronger.

Encourage take-up of Leadership Certificate.

Ardscoil Ris and Ardscoil Na Mara are accompanying the English schools Youth Ambassadors on their Geneva trip in January.

Planning of a European Congress for Principals and Edmund Rice Link Staff is underway and due to be held in Ireland in early February of 2019.

Ensure we record and share what is happening in EREBB. Use eEREBB on social media and possibly start up an international journal – each region to submit quarterly.

Staff Advocacy workshops. First will be held in Woodeaves on January 17th to train all staff interested in running ERI or social justice groups within their schools.

This programme will be rolled out throughout the province next year.

Advocacy Exchange

A group of young activists from the Edmund Rice Network in England took part in the very first Edmund Rice Youth Advocacy Exchange in Cork, Ireland, in November. Ten young people from the English Edmund Rice Camps and beyond joined similar groups from Belfast and Cork to explore issues around the Right to Education for children.

Spending a week in the Life Centre, an Edmund Rice alternative education programme in the city centre, the group experienced an incredible programme of seminars and workshops around human rights and advocacy. They also formalised their connection with similar groups from Cork and Belfast by establishing the first European Province Youth Advocacy Group. This means that we now have 30 dynamic young people across the European Network who are committed to becoming agents for change! Check out Edmund Rice England on Facebook and @edmundrice_eng on Twitter to see all the exciting activities and inspirational speakers who made the week what it was.

Not only were the group addressed by some amazing speakers and facilitators, they also had the chance to put advocacy into practice by creating and delivering street campaigns around the Right to Education. Even social time was aimed at giving young people a louder voice, with activities including participation in the fantastic Dragon of Shandon Parade on Halloween!

All this was only possible due to the hard work of Don O’Leary and Rachel Lacey from the Life Centre - they gave the young people a week they will never forget and we owe them our heartfelt thanks.

Funded by Leargas Causeway, the exchange will be repeated in Belfast (focusing on homelessness) and Liverpool (focusing on refugees and asylum seekers) over the next 12 months. We hope to run the same programme every year, so it’s a great opportunity for those leaving Edmund Rice schools at 18 to stay connected with the Network.

Edmund Rice Camps

Every year in July and August, when staff and students have packed up for the summer, something amazing happens in Edmund Rice Schools across England.

A movement of almost 200 young people, including Edmund Rice students past and present, give up a week of their holidays, or sometimes even jobs, to give children from local primary schools an experience they will never forget. They do this not as ‘supervisors’ or ‘childminders’, but as Leaders, Coordinators and Mentors. They ‘own’ the project and the success of each Camp depends entirely on them.

In 2017, eight Edmund Rice Summer Camps were delivered across England, from Stoke to Sunderland and Manchester to Merseyside. As ever, it was a life-changing experience not only for the children who joined us, but also for the young people who never cease to amaze with their energy, sensitivity and passion. Although each Camp lasts for just one week, the Mentors and Coordinators have worked all year round to develop as exciting an experience as possible. Without the dedication of Camp Mentors: Aidan Watson, Becc Gradwell, Adam Hughes, Tom Walsh, Mike Grundy, Naomi Worrall, Megan Alfred, Laura Manning and Natalie Cummins, as well as their teams of Coordinators, the Camps simply would not happen. Throughout the year, these people have delivered residential and non-residential training sessions, run Prep days, taken part in pilgrimages, formed sub-committees and attended countless meetings.

The diversity of activities that make up a Camp is spectacular! From horse-riding to swimming, Harry Potter-themed days to indoor trampolining, the children get the chance to do things they would never usually do in their holidays. Plus, they get to do it with inspirational young people who genuinely become role models for them. Each day, when the children go home and the dust settles, the volunteers spend time reflecting on their own personal journeys. This time is when the lasting, life-long relationships with each other are formed. At a time when young people are getting a pretty bad press, these guys are seriously bucking the trend.

Thanks to Redcourt, Runnymede, St Edward’s, St Anselm’s, St Joseph’s, St Aidan’s, St Anthony’s, Upton Hall, The Mount, St Mary’s and St Sebastian’s community in Salford for their ongoing support. Without them, Edmund Rice Camps would not exist.
Community Outreach. News from Asylum Link, Merseyside

As ever, things continue to shift and change, with different people coming and going at the centre. The September ESOL Classes are well-established and we are starting to find out about the different places people come from: Zaghawa, Masali and Ningala nestle alongside better-known languages like Urdu, Swahili and Portuguese. I always marvel at the ability of people to adapt to this new environment, leaving behind their culture, family, job and previous life, getting to grips with a new city, unfamiliar weather, strange food and a strong accent.

Normal services continue: the casework team is always busy, there is a queue for the Social Worker and a longer one for the Bike Mechanics. A big group led by Brother Eamonn, headed off to the Blackpool ‘Hallucinations’ last Friday, with a bus and fish and chips provided by St Anselm’s. Trips and visits such as this are important points in peo-

people’s lives and we should never underestimate the comfort and support provided by these very human acts of friendship.

After one event like this a man told me that it was wonderful, “to feel normal, if only for a few hours.”

Renovations at the centre are ongoing and we had help from Volunteers with the Brain Charity, to paint our front reception and meeting room. We hope to return the favour with a day’s cooking at some point. Christmas is on its way and with it come questions like: Who’s going to be Santa this year? Where will we have the Christmas meal? (our main and hall now houses the clothes), and what’s the last day for the food store? Along with the concert, fundraising dinner and fashion show (18th November), we also have Christmas cards and wristbands for sale this year, as we continue to try new ways to raise funds for the centre.

Thanks to everyone within the Edmund Rice Fellowship who has helped us over the years and we look forward to maintaining the strong links that help us all fulfil our common purpose, making our world a better place.

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Edmund Rice International Youth Ambassadors’ Gathering

On Friday 10th November, students from St Ambrose, St Anselm’s and St Mary’s Colleges attended an Edmund Rice Youth Ambassadors’ Day at Woodseaves. Eight ambassadors were present and participated in sessions on human trafficking and the issue of homelessness. The day, led by Tom Murray and Ann Nichols, also allowed for discussion of the meaning of advocacy and ways to improve our work in schools to highlight the problems that we can help in our work. Notable ideas included running a ‘Question Time’ session with schools across the network and running student-led PSHE days for younger years.

The day proved invaluable as a chance to meet other ambassadors and hear from experienced advocates, serving as motivation to do more in our schools and in the wider community. The Geneva trip was also discussed and all the ambassadors were excited at the prospect of spending time at the UN and seeing the work of ERI on a larger scale.

Daniel Savin
ERI Youth Ambassador St. Mary’s College

Youth Ambassadors with their ERI Mission Statements to be proudly displayed in their schools for all to see!
At Woodeaves we are beginning to gather video interviews with as many Brothers as we can to be able to share with schools. The first to undergo this ordeal (and many thanks to our ‘guinea pig’) was Brother Eamonn Gillen (Malachy).

In each magazine, we will write up one of our interviews. We hope you enjoy hearing from the Brothers and reading about their lives.

**Background and becoming a Christian Brother**

“There were 6 children in my family in County Tyrone, I always say we were a very balanced family: it went boy, girl, boy, girl, boy, girl! I was number 5. My mother stayed home and looked after us and my father was an entrepreneur - quite unusual for his time. He owned a lorry and a car. The lorry he used for haulage and the car as a taxi. After he was bought out by the public transport company he opened clothes shops. I had a very happy childhood, people in our town were not either rich or poor, rather we were all the same and we made our own recreation. I went to the national school where I was happy and there wasn’t much corporal punishment. We went to mass and said our evening prayers. I had an uncle who was a Christian Brother who would write to us from Dublin expressing a wish for the girls in the family to become nurses and the boys to become Brothers. He was the influence which made me join the Brothers and he lived to the age of 95, so he saw me develop in my role in the Congregation.

**Life Philosophy**

“I have been blessed with an even temperament and I have not had to overcome any big obstacles in my life. I am a very driven and determined person (which came out in my heyday on the rugby field!). I remain on an even keel and I have many small strengths and weaknesses. My biggest weakness is that I work too hard! (and has a great sense of humour - Editor)

I have enjoyed the formation I have had from the Christian Brothers through study and scripture and of working with other people. My philosophy for life - if I have such a thing - has evolved during my life and is based on both Jesus of Nazareth and Blessed Edmund.

**Roles within the Congregation.**

“I have worked a lot in administration within the Congregation, but for the past eight years, in Callan, I have been involved with the pilgrims who come to Callan, those people who are very dedicated to Blessed Edmund. This was my favourite role - I loved being involved with the great followers of Blessed Edmund who came with a wish to see where he was born and grew up. I met a great many visitors, mainly from schools, who came from around the world. It was a very enlightening, very happy and often very entertaining time.”

**Vision for the future of the Brother’s mission**

“The future for the mission will be within the Network. The growth that is taking place within the Network around the world is fantastic. I read with interest the newsletters from branches of the network about the great work which is happening - I’d say the future of the Christian Brothers lies within the Network.

To anyone considering joining the Congregation today I would ask them; “What is it exactly that you want to do?” Our lives are not involved in the mission in England so much now, where the work is done by the Network, but you would be required to go abroad so consider carefully if that is what you want to do.”

**A life in mission.**

**Brothers stories**

**At Woodeaves**

Contact the team at Woodeaves if your school would like to bring students for lunch with the brothers.
1. Brandon Adamson
Brandon uses the icon of Blessed Edmund Rice to represent how teachers & support staff work ‘in service to others’. Vocations to share the Church’s mission underpinned by the St Anselm’s motto.

2. Carole Anne
Carole Anne’s series of physical works have evolved from her own experiences of scars, both physically and mentally. The work started by looking at the scars she has on her skin from operations at birth.

3. Charles O’Connor
In his composition Charles represents Jesus as a teacher inspiring the hearts and minds of his students to develop & use their talents & to build a more just society. He aims to capture the effect of a stained glass window as we look out with Jesus and his students towards the sunrise representing a positive future.

4. Francis Metz
Francis depicts us looking on in the foreground as members of our community who have gone before us enter the Kingdom of Heaven beyond the clouds. As missionaries bringing the Good News to all.

5. Kali Bresnan
Kali Bresnan created a work which was about how we worship the wrong idols. She looked at gods and deities from many times and cultures and made connections between colour, pattern and logos to hide corporate symbols in a figure who should be feared for her power and consumption.

6. Max Talbot
Max uses the St Anselm’s College motto surrounded by representations of the Church & Mass to represent teachers & support staff working in the service of others.

7. Rafferty Prior
Rafferty is using herself, but moving beyond traditional self-portraiture to promote messages of positivity and confidence. Rafferty is breaking the mould of stereotypical youth in posed self portraits.

8. Ranjula Ranasinghe
Depicting symbols of the Altar and Mass combined with elements of the icon of Blessed Edmund Rice Ranjula represents the Church as a community bringing the good news of the Gospel to all.

9. Greg Williams
The intricately hand cut and layered stencils are layered together to create images which attack those who refuse a safe haven and sanctity for people in need. The graffiti is important as an accessible voice and a means used as public voice and protest.

10. Gabriel Ford
Gabriel’s composition aims to represent the spiritual through symbols of Christianity found in stained glass windows & collaged elements of the Blessed Edmund Rice icon to represent the Mass.

11. Georgina Duncan
Georgina’s landscapes aren’t just about how beautiful our world is. Georgina is using unconventional colours and bold bright, almost acidic colours to remind us to use our senses.

12. Thomas Wiggins
Through Thomas’s depiction of Our Lady of Fatima he represents the nurturing of a living Faith and living beyond the material world.

Theme
The Eight Essentials
Key Stages 1-5

Winners of the art competition in each key stage as well as the overall winning piece of art will be chosen at the beginning of December with prizes to follow.

Look out for the artwork on the walls when you visit us at Woodraves and the overall winner will become our new greetings card.

Thank you for all your wonderful entries, the team have enjoyed looking at them immensely, a section of the artwork is shown on these pages.
Redcourt St. Anselm’s Preparatory School

A library for Maria Immaculata school, Nairobi

On Monday 16th October, the school were very fortunate to have a presentation by Sister Martha, a Head teacher from a school in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. She was joined by her friends from the charity ‘Change a Child’s Life’ to help them when they go back. We gave them a tour of Redcourt’s library and showed them how it is sorted by the ‘Dewey’ system for non-fiction books and how we issue and discharge books from school. Children from Redcourt were shown pictures of the school in Africa and of the homes the children live in. The Redcourt children were shocked to learn that there can be up to ten people living in one room in a makeshift hut.

Walking in their shoes

Some of the children from Redcourt tried on shoes, typical of those worn in Nairobi, which are made from the rubber from old tyres. They paraded around the school hall wearing the shoes for all to see.

Help us to help them

One of our main charitable focuses will be to help their school by collecting and donating both academic and non-academic books to Maria Immaculata. We would like to ask anybody local to Redcourt that if you have any good quality picture books, novels or information books you would like to send to Kenya, please bring them in to the school, clearly labelled, and we will arrange to have them sent to Maria Immaculata’s new library early in 2018.

Runnymede St. Edward’s School

Macmillan Coffee Morning

This year our Macmillan Coffee Morning raised a fantastic £720! Thank you to all the families who supported Macmillan by donating cakes and attending the coffee morning for a natter and a cuppa! A lovely time was had by all, and many people will benefit from the money raised.

Harvest

On 1st October, we celebrated the Harvest Festival with Year 6. It was a super collective worship, with the whole school in attendance. All the children and staff were able to see the generosity of parents with the food laid out in the Ley Hall. All our contributions were then taken to the Deysbrook Fair Share Café in West Derby; the staff there were truly delighted with our generous and useful donations.

CAFOD Fun Run

Last Friday we held the annual CAFOD Fun Run. A wonderful event with many pupils wearing bright colours to support the event. This year we raised £339.10! Thank you to all those who kindly donated.

Edmund Rice Group at St. Mary’s

The Edmund Rice Group at St. Mary’s Preparatory have shown strong commitment and a lot of enthusiasm this term. This year former pupil, Sian Moran, has taken the Edmund Rice group on board. The group consists of 26 children who are very willing to give up their time, energy and commitment to help those around them.

Once a week the group meets for prayer and reflection and each week a different member of the group will lead a collective worship. The group also discusses ways in which they can raise money for St. Martin’s in Liberia and how they can help others in their school and the local community.

In September, the children organised a cake sale on the school playground at home time. They designed posters and made their own cakes. With such positive energy, commitment and enthusiasm the children raised £130! On a weekly basis, the group visits Craignair Care Home, were they enjoy having conversations, playing games, playing their musical instruments and singing to the residents.

This term, the group will be donating Advent calendars to the local Food Bank and they have also organised a Christmas Jumper Day to raise money. Everyone in the school, including teachers, will wear a Christmas jumper and bring in a donation. The group will continue thinking of original ideas to raise money for the ongoing Edmund Rice charities.
Prep School News

St. Ambrose Preparatory School

A special ‘Outreach’ Harvest assembly at St. Ambrose Prep

Thank you to all our family and friends who joined Prep 3 to celebrate their Harvest assembly. The harvest gifts sent in to school by so many children were amazing.

Your kindness is always much appreciated, especially by the many grateful recipients. The gifts were collected on Wednesday by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Wythenshawe, who are going to pass them on to needy families in their local area. Sister Eileen, from Loreto nuns, also collected some gifts and she is going to deliver them to ‘Revive’ in Salford, a charity working with refugees and asylum seekers. A very big thank you to the group of parents who served refreshments.

The children in Prep 6 have started to undertake their ‘Edmund Rice Awards’. We are lucky enough to work with Tom Murray on this, who helps the children gain more insight into the Eight Essentials of Edmund Rice and the work which he did.

At the start of October, we celebrated our Harvest service. Children in Pre-Prep were asked to bring in items of food, and the Prep children were given envelopes to decorate and fill with money from jobs that they had done to help at home. We had a large amount of food from the generous donations which meant that a number of food baskets could be passed on to Age UK.

The EYFS children held their own assembly in the school hall, where parents were able to come and listen to the children talk about Harvest. Later that day the rest of the school took part in our annual Harvest Mass at St Teresa’s.

The money raised by the Prep children was then given to the following charities:

- Edmund Rice International
- CAFOD
- The Kabanda Trust, supporting Aid work abroad

We welcomed Mr Andrews from CAFOD, who came into school to talk to the children about the important work CAFOD continues to do around the world and how even the smallest amount of money raised by the children can make a big difference.

Prior to half term, we organised ‘Multicultural Week’. As a school, we looked at different religions and cultural influences from around the world. We welcomed a number of visitors to the school, who took time to talk to the children. We had parents who talked about Sikhism and Hinduism, and were very lucky to have another parent spend three days showing the children how to make sushi. The children also learned Indian-themed dancing, which they really enjoyed. To finish off the week, we welcomed Tom Murray back into school to talk to the children about ‘Vocations’ during our whole school assembly.

St. Joseph’s Prep School, Stoke-on-Trent

‘Exciting and Busy!’ The start to our new school year.

It’s been an especially busy start to the new school year at St Joseph’s Preparatory school, where we have welcomed a number of new children to our school family. They have settled in well, making lots of new friends.

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**College News**

**Restart a Heart Day at St. Ambrose College**

St. Ambrose College students were told exactly what to do when faced with some genuinely heart stopping moments on National Restart a Heart day. Parent and First Responder with Greater Manchester Ambulance Service, Chris Steadman-Byrne, recruited his son Adam to give a demonstration in cardiac pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques which could save a life if you are first on the spot. Chris said, “Some 60,000 people have a cardiac arrest every year but only 10% survive. If everyone knew how to perform CPR, the simple task of repeatedly compressing the chest by 5 or 6 cm, that figure would be much higher.” ‘Ideally CPR should be on the National Curriculum as is the case in both Scandinavia and America where survival rates are 25%. As that hasn’t happened yet, the Ambulance Service and British Heart Foundation have got together and last year, on National Restart a Heart day taught 70,000 children in primary and secondary schools how to give CPR.”

Currently, the Greater Manchester Ambulance service works with some 51 schools across the area to teach CPR techniques and is looking for more partnerships. Mr Steadman-Byrne’s son Adam, a Year 9 pupil at St. Ambrose, said, “Dad has been drilling this and other life-saving techniques into me since I was a young boy and I’m pleased that so many of my friends have now been shown exactly what and how to do it and how to perform CPR if they are the first responder.”

Yorkshire Ambulance Service student paramedic, Shae McKee, reiterated the age-old advice, “Whatever you do, call 999 immediately, because even if you don’t know how to do CPR, the team can take you through the procedure over the phone.”

**Chaplaincy News from St. Edward’s College**

This half-term has been an exciting time for the Chaplaincy at St. Edward’s College, Liverpool with nineteen of our pupils from all three Key Stages attaining their Bronze Award in the newly launched Archdiocesan Faith in Action programme. Public recognition was received at a local awards ceremony for their efforts throughout the year in helping others through outreach and service, at parish, local and national level, supporting charities, such as Alzheimer’s UK, Asylum Link Merseyside and the Medaille Trust. Members have confidently carried the torch of faith, by their attendance at, and participation in, Morning Prayer, Year group Masses, Advent Reflections in Form time, Stations of the Cross at Lent and a whole host of activities, including setting up and clearing away after Services and Masses and taking a leading role in the organisation of the Feast of Corpus Christi procession in June. Members have used their talents to fundraise, campaign and lead the way in putting their Faith into Action, underpinned by prayer and Gospel values.

Our Edmund Rice Advocacy group for Sixth Form students runs as an enrichment activity and has grown in popularity this term with many new students joining the ranks. The group, along with our Faith in Action and CATFOD Clubs, have teamed up, together for various fundraising activities and assisted with the collection of tinned and dried food for the Liverpool Food Bank. All pupils and students were encouraged to bring a donation for the Food Bank to the College’s Mass to celebrate the Feast of St. Edward at the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral on Sunday 15th October and we were pleased to see such a large number of items collected for this valuable cause.

Well done to all who have been involved.

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**Cathedral Choristers visit to Westminster**

On 7 November, the boy choristers of the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral visited London for a once in a lifetime opportunity to sing in Westminster Cathedral as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations. The boys took part in Mass that was being celebrated in Westminster Cathedral, which marked the first time that the two leading Catholic choirs in England had sung together.

The following day, the pupils were given the privilege of celebrating a private Mass in Westminster Abbey at the tomb of St. Edward, the patron saint of their school, St. Edward’s College. That evening the choristers performed Mozart’s Requiem with the choir from Westminster. The concert, conducted by Martin Baker, was magnificent and the choir was commended for their singing throughout the concert and during the rehearsals.

On the final day of the trip the choristers visited the Houses of Commons and the House of Lords and were able to take a tour around the Palace of Westminster thanks to parliament being in recess.

The following week saw the return leg, with the choristers of Westminster making the journey to Liverpool to again perform Mozart’s Requiem together, this time at the Metropolitan Cathedral.

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**St. Joseph’s College**

**Reflection on ‘Walking in the footsteps of Edmund Rice’**

This trip was truly invigorating as I gained a greater understanding of the story of Edmund Rice and the powerful effects of his compassionate heart. What’s more, the fact that it was a pilgrimage offered a journey to Edmund’s home. Visiting his birth place at West Court, Callan, I found it fascinating to see how well-preserved his home was and to study replicas of the historical objects within his home. I was surprised at the size of the cottage but understood when I realised he had six brothers and two step sisters! Unfortunately, he was born into a time where Catholics were not allowed education in public institutions due to penal laws. Personally, I think it is a great testament to his parents that they educated him with the help of friars and secretly sent him to school. The institution of their strong catholic faith in Edmund Rice, through daily prayers and their courage, built compassion in him.

We also had the opportunity to visit Waterford city where I learnt more about his life. I did not realise how young he was - seventeen - when he was apprenticed to his uncle and through his diligence, he became a successful entrepreneur. One of the most powerful moments of the trip was when I learnt about his disabled daughter and his caring nature for children. Despite being in a comfortable position financially, the fact that he sold his business to start a school for poor children shows the depth of his benevolence. This connected with the artwork that we were shown in Callan depicting the image of his hands with open arms to his daughter and children.

When given a tour around Waterford we viewed plaques around the city showing his great achievements, such as opening the school and founding the Christian Brothers. All the stories of his life made me overwhelmed at how caring this man was and how he remains a role model today.

Not only was this trip a learning experience it was a time to get close to my fellow Senior Prefects in the wonderful company of Brothers Pat and Martin - who truly enlivened the trip for us! It was wonderful to share evening reflections and episodes of prayer throughout the trip, which for me, drew me closer to God. I especially enjoyed the times of peace to reflect and the overwhelming dialogue and personal communication with others. Overall, this trip was well-rounded, filled with history and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Edmund Rice. My hope is that I am now able to continue to walk in his ways throughout the rest of my life.

Ellen Nelson-Rowe Year 13 St. Joseph’s College

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**St. Joseph’s U15s Rugby Team visit Revive**

In November, the U15s enjoyed a very rewarding visit. Instead of going directly to watch a professional rugby match we, their teachers, arranged an important stop-off first. This deepened their experience and awareness of those less fortunate.

The team set off from St Joseph’s College at 2pm and went to see Brothers Ger and Tony at St Sebastian’s Community Centre in Salford where they met five Asylum Seekers. The U15s team had a fantastic talk with a couple of Asylum Seekers about their journey in life and why they had left their country. Some reasons were due to war and famine and others wanted a better life for themselves and to get an education. After their discussion, it was fantastic to see everyone take part in games of pool and table tennis. The interaction was magnificent to see and certainly an eye-opener for our students.

Once they had finished having a bite to eat with Brothers Ger and Tony, they set off to the AJ Bell Stadium, the home of Sale Sharks, where they then took part in a coaching clinic and had a player appearance from one of the U20s players. The reward was obviously watching Sale Sharks play later that evening and, with a Sharks win, it really did put the icing on the cake for what was a great trip. A huge thank you must go to Brother Ger and Tony for having us and the support from parents who provided and donated biscuits to St Sebastian’s Community Centre for the Asylum Seekers and any other members of the community who require that little bit of support and warmth in life which they find at Revive.

Mr G Barton
College News

St. Mary’s College news

St. Mary’s College, Crosby, is proud to be an inclusive community where students of different faiths and those of no faith are all encouraged and supported in their own spiritual journey. In celebration of Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, Sixth Form student Mathumye Sachchin brought in some fabulous traditional sweet treats and lit candles to the gods.

Lower Sixth students at St. Mary’s College enjoyed an inspiring retreat day recently, visiting the Sisters of Charity and Asylum Link in Liverpool. Led by Head of Sixth Form, Patrick Duffy, this was a chance for the St. Mary’s students to explore the work that is done in Liverpool for the most vulnerable. The students listened to and prayed with the sisters and gained a deeper understanding of the work they do.

The students were then taken to different parts of the city to see the stark reality of homelessness first-hand. They were encouraged and supported in their own spiritual journey.

St. Mary’s College celebrated a special Mass in the school’s O’Halloran Hall at the start of the 2017-18 academic year to welcome the new Year 7 pupils and their families. Father Simon Gore from Animate Youth Ministries celebrated Mass and many of the Year 7 pupils performed various roles during the Mass. These exciting times at St. Mary’s College and with centenary celebrations just over one year away, the school is going from strength to strength. Pupil numbers are on the rise, the academic, sporting, musical and other achievements continue to be outstanding and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) rated St. Mary’s College and its Preparatory School ‘Excellent’ in all areas in their 2017 inspection.

The first of this year’s whole school House assemblies at St. Mary’s College was led by Lourdes House, named in honour of the school’s patron and one of four houses at St. Mary’s.

Mr David Rasores-Parry, Lourdes House Tutor, had this to say afterwards:

“As a House, we have been trying to focus on qualities of being kind and compassionate and we were lucky and delighted to be joined by Charlotte Hopkins from the Whitechapel Centre in Liverpool for our assembly. The Whitechapel Centre provides support and solutions to people affected by homelessness. Charlotte talked about some of the issues that lead to homelessness and some of the things that we can do to help those who find themselves in difficulty. It was really interesting to hear about celebrities who have experienced homelessness and how easy it is for so many of us to end up in such difficult circumstances.

Charlotte encouraged us all to take note of the ‘No Second Night Out’ campaign and said that anyone who sees someone on the streets of Liverpool who is begging or looks like they need some support can call a dedicated helpline and someone from the Whitechapel Centre will go out and attend to and support the person and their needs.”

We held a small change collection at the end of the assembly and as a House we intend to raise lots of money for the Whitechapel Centre and perhaps help get a few people off the streets as the cold and dark sets in.

St. Boniface’s news

The Pearl of Africa Children’s Choir visit St. Boniface’s Catholic College

Families in Plymouth were invited to St Boniface’s Catholic College for an evening of traditional Ugandan song and dance in November. They were treated to a feast of high octane music, songs bursting with heritage and passion, powerful drumming and energetic movement from the internationally acclaimed Pearl of Africa Children’s Choir, who hit the city as part of a three-month tour of the UK.

The audience were energised and ‘wowed’ by the choir’s evocative mix of uplifting vocals, infectious rhythms and backflips!

During the day, the 18 choir members from the Molly and Paul Foundation Schools in Uganda shared their culture with students at St Boniface’s Catholic College and delivered African singing, drumming, dancing and craft making workshops too. The choir’s orphans children, who have lived, trained and attended school together, are ambassadors for hundreds of similar children back home in one of the world’s poorest nations. Their aim is to raise awareness and fundraise monies to support the work of the UK based charity ‘Pearl of Africa Childcare’ (http://www.pearlofafrica.org.uk) which has given them, and thousands of others, the chance of an education and a safe place to live.

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“The build-up to the choir’s visit provided a great opportunity for our students to gain a unique and thorough insight into the way that other people live, whilst exposing them to a different culture,” said Kate Stockmans, Teacher of Drama and Music at St Boniface’s Catholic College. To maximise the impact of the visit, her students have taken responsibility for fundraising activities for Pearl of Africa Childcare and have been experimenting with an African Drumming scheme of work in Music, applying the cultural knowledge they’ve learnt over the last few months to their performances.

“The Pearl of Africa Choir also visited us six years ago and both times it has been an unforgettable event for the school,” said Duncan Oasey, SENCO at St Boniface’s Catholic College. “I’ve never seen our students so motivated by a school visit! The singing and dancing was outstanding and the energy was infectious so we were all very much looking forward to the choir’s return.” he added.

With Christmas just around the corner, visitors could buy African crafts at the event. All proceeds from the event went to improving the education and living standards of orphaned children in Uganda, giving them shelter, food and health care.
**St. Anselm’s College**

Boys from St. Anselm’s College raised funds and organised for some 126 refugees and asylum seekers to go to Blackpool in two coach loads, one from Asylum Link, Mersseyways and one from M’rang. (The mother and baby group). The group enjoyed a traditional fish and chip tea and the delights of the Illuminations.

Pietro, Miss Baines and I went to Asylum Link in Liverpool and met up with brother Eamon. We were given a brief tour of the facilities and eventually headed off, on a bus, to Blackpool. There were a total of one hundred and sixty asylum seekers who travelled with us to Blackpool but we were only on one bus out of two. During the journey we converted with the asylum seekers, took pictures and eventually we parked up and Pietro and I were designated to go into a local Fish and Chip restaurant to pick up an order we had placed. We passed out each packet of fish and chips, with drinks too, to the asylum seekers and continued on our way to the centre of Blackpool. Ten minutes later we reached our destination and looked at the Blackpool lights, many of the asylum seekers were mesmerised by the illuminations, especially the young children. We continued to chat and learn the many stories of each asylum seeker on the way back to Liverpool, before we said our farewells to both Brother Eamon and the Asylum Seekers.

Cieran Harte St. Anselm’s College

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**Pre-Immersion Preparation Explained**

**Ethan Urquhart, Head Boy at St. Anselm’s College**

Every year the College strives to send a group of Upper Sixth Form students to Sierra Leone for an Immersion journey, bringing us closer to the reality of life in rural Africa. This trip is often the highlight for many throughout their journey in the College. However, it comes at a cost - we are currently planning multiple fundraising activities to assist the final cost of the trip, which is typically priced at £400 per student. These fundraisers involve events such as discos for the lower years, bag packs in local supermarkets and organised dinners accompanied by raffles. Each of these events requires planning from both students and teachers alike, working toward one goal, something of a harmonious effort. With a great task ahead of us, and the ambition to exceed expectations in even the most overlooked situations, I have the confidence to say we will fulfil, if not surpass, our goal.

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**St. Boniface & Edmund Rice**

St Boniface’s Catholic College, based on the south-west coast in the City of Plymouth St Boniface’s is celebrating its 154th year providing an Edmund Rice education to boys from across the region. A potted history of the school: In 1863, the school became “St Boniface Boys’ Catholic School” and relocated to North Road with Mr Clarke, an old boy of the Christian Brothers’ School in Gibraltar, as Head Master. From the beginning both boarders and day boys were catered for.

In September 1883 the Basilian Fathers, exiled from France, bought the property at Beaconfield, Plymouth. Boarders were accommodated at the residence at Beaconfield and a small school for day boys was opened at Grovesnor Street near the centre of Plymouth. It was known as the Catholic Institute and was staffed by teachers from Beaconfield. The boarding school at Beaconfield continued under the management of the Basilian Fathers until July 1899.

In 1900 the diocesan authorities purchased premises for the school at Wyndham Square, and the school was placed under the patronage of St Boniface. It was staffed by the diocesan clergy under the headmastership of Provost Burns.

The De La Salle Brothers were invited to take over the management of the school in 1911, but on the outbreak of World War I were recalled to France. Their places were taken by the Presentation Brothers who found the premises at Wyndham Square inadequate and the Christian Brothers reopened the school at Beaconfield. The buildings had been erected in 1910 as a convent boarding school, provided excellent accommodation for the 127 day boys and fifteen boarders; thus began a new era in the school’s chequered career. The headmaster was Br J Dudley McDonald (1931–1944).

During World War II the College was evacuated to Buckfast Abbey between 1941 and 1945. During this period, the school buildings in Plymouth were used as strategic operation bases for the Admiralty and continued to be used even after the students returned to Beacon Park. In 1992, the Congregation of Christian Brothers funded the creation of the Edmund Rice Centre at St Boniface’s, which was opened by Brother BD Sassi - Provincial of the Christian Brothers on September 3rd that year.

At the heart of the building, on the ground floor, is a large icon in rich colours telling the life story of Blessed Edmund. In July 2017, our new Head teacher - Neil Maslen was appointed to lead the school. In every aspect of our lives at St Boniface’s, it’s not difficult to recognise one of the eight essentials of Edmund Rice Education. We asked our students to write about one aspect of our school that reflects each essential.

**Evangelising the modern world** - our new assembly programme has focused more on the Gospel Values that underpin our daily lives in Christ.

**Promoting the spiritual** - every September, our new Year 7 intake spend three days at Buckfast Abbey on retreat; whilst there, the staff and students take part in a range of activities aimed at promoting their spiritual and personal development.

**Building a Christian community** - this year our school introduced prayer three times a day – our school prayer in the morning, thanksgiving at lunchtime and an end of the day prayer.

**Compassion for those in need** - our new Head teacher Mr Maslen has said that each term we will raise money for a single charity. Each term our school focuses on one major charity to support through a series of events aimed at raising not only funding, but also understanding, reasoning, spiritual understanding and awareness. This term, we have been supporting the Pearl of Africa Children’s Choir, who are currently touring the UK to raise money to send their friends to school in Uganda.

Our amazing inspirational drama teacher Miss Stockmans has visited Uganda four times and sponsors students so that they can go to school. She has visited the project that the Pearl of Africa Choir are from so has witnessed first-hand the support that they need.

**Concern for the whole person** - this year St Boniface’s created the Student Support Centre which is manned throughout the day and offers advice and guidance, pastoral support and reflection time to allow students and their parents the opportunity to support the whole person.

**Striving for excellence** - our recent Ofsted report was not as we would’ve hoped, however, our new Head and the LMB for our school are working really hard to get us back to the outstanding school we once were. Student numbers are increasing, and the school feels more like it used to.

**Education as a Christian calling** - our Parish Priest Fr Jonathan Bielawski is working with the staff at our school to provide training and development, and a deeper understanding of their role in a Catholic school.

**Education for justice** - each year we raise awareness of the work of CAW and look at a social justice issue for all. We extend a invitation to any of our Edmund Rice Network to visit our school, or look for opportunities to develop stronger links with other schools.

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**# EREBB Immersion update**

Key staff members from schools and the offices across the European Province came together on 16th November in Dublin at a collaborative meeting on forging ahead with Immersion. The aim of the very productive meeting was to share the excellent practice which is going on in our schools in Ireland, the North of Ireland and England. Topics such as the purpose of Immersion, the impact on staff, students and the school and the practicalities of organising the visits, as well as the highlights and pitfalls, were examined in detail. The information is being collated by the English Office, and following the forthcoming Immersions early in 2019, we will all come together again to formalise the new European Province Handbook to help all schools run the best Immersion experiences possible for as many of their students as they can. Thanks to all those who are working hard in schools to provide these amazing, life-changing experiences for their students, please keep sharing your ideas with us.
Brother David Ryan announces a new ‘Breathing Space group’

We have just started a new ‘Breathing Space’ Group in Liverpool. This group is from the local area in West Derby and participants have made a commitment to meet seven times on a monthly basis for two hours. A safe and confidential place is created where people can come and explore their own faith journey, calling upon their own personal experience of living. They are free to raise questions and also doubts about their faith. Anybody can join such a group, as it is not an intellectual journey but rather more of a heart journey. Lots of stimulus material is provided. Another valuable element of this process that is provided is a period of quiet, reflective time for oneself.

Starting up a Spiritual Conversation group – advice from Tom Murray.

Starting up Conversation Groups in your school or community is very simple! There are a number of people in the Network who are already trained in facilitating such groups and they would be happy to lead you in forming and sustaining your own. Spiritual Conversations are an ideal way of giving staff, parents, governors and even students the space to explore their own personal journeys. Typically, groups of six to ten people would meet every couple of months, reflecting on superb materials provided by the facilitator.

DALIT and the Edmund Rice Network

DALIT is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit organisation established in 1998 by a group of young Dalit people working for the development and support of the Dalits and other vulnerable and socially excluded groups.

"Dalit" is a Bengali word meaning "someone trampled under the feet of someone else." It is used to identify an outcast minority of oppressed and deprived people. DALIT NGO is based in Bangladesh.

The connection between DALIT and the Christian Brothers began in the early 1990s when Mr. Swapon Kumar Das came to Liverpool to train as a nurse. While studying at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital, Swapon stayed with the Brothers in the Parr Street community. After completing his studies, Swapon returned to his native Bangladesh, where he initiated many medical based projects, including more than twenty small basic village schools. Brother Chris Brown visited Bangladesh in 2005 to inspect the work being done by DALIT. By that time, the Parr Street community, and later the Christian Brothers at Province level, had started sending funds to Swapon to support his work. Brother Chris writes, "Swapon travels through all sorts of rough terrain to get to the villages on his simple scooter. He and his family live on a shoe-string, a car would be no good to him, he would feel embarrassed in the local surroundings. This is real Edmund Rice work and the Founder would be proud of him."

Most of the Dalit people in Bangladesh do not have any concept on human rights; they are unaware of their rights and dignity. DALIT NGO is an attempt to develop awareness on rights and social issues from grassroots level. This is real advocacy work. In 2016 DALIT was awarded the Nelson Mandela Prize for its contribution to the field of social activism.

Annual accounts and reports are sent to the European Province in response to the financial support sent every year. More information about DALIT can be obtained from the CB Parr Street Community or by visiting www.dalitbd.org

Br Dominic Sassi

Have you visited our new website?

www.edmundriceengland.org

• News
• Events
• Schools
• Prayers
• Network Activities

Bookmark us today and stay up-to-date
## Network Events *Dates for your Diary:*

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<td>13th January</td>
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<td>ERI / Advocacy Staff Training</td>
<td>17th January</td>
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<td>Congregation Leadership Team Visit</td>
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<td>Secondary Schools whole staff Spirituality Day - Keynote Speaker Dr John Kelly</td>
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Stay up to date with the latest network news and events on our website [www.edmundriceengland.org](http://www.edmundriceengland.org) or follow us on our social pages Facebook Edmund Rice England | Twitter @edmundrice_eng