Edmund Rice Day 2020

Theme: Looking Out My Window

In this year, 2020, when all the world is affected by Covid-19, we come together on 5 May to celebrate the life of Edmund Ignatius Rice. Edmund’s Christ-centred vision and life’s work were seeds that have grown into the many communities of education, ministry and brotherhood throughout the world. We, as Edmund People, are called, just as he was, to look outside our window in this time of isolation and lockdown: to look for those who most need support. We are also challenged, as Edmund People, to look for and be signs of hope in this world through our words and actions.

In the package:
You will find four key resources based on the Edmund Rice example of prayer, community and action. Following those key resources, you’ll find a range of activities that could also be selected for classroom and ministry involvement in Edmund Rice Day 2020.

1. Prayer Ritual
The Prayer Ritual explores the theme: Looking out my window...with hope

The ritual has been designed so that it can be conducted (in full or in part) in a variety of modes and includes options for an Oceania group and a global group.

This ritual will be conducted on Zoom for Edmund Rice entities and communities throughout Oceania on Tuesday 5th May at 12.45pm AEST.

A global version of the ritual will be conducted on Zoom on Tuesday 5th May at 9pm AEST.

Adult members of Edmund Rice schools and ministries are welcome to join the Zoom rituals and should email bessie.mutusva@erea.edu.au should they wish to do so prior to 1 May 2020.

Appendix A contains the text of the ritual. There will be a folder of resources available soon including a powerpoint and media clips which can be used as part of the ritual.

The ritual contains:
   a. Acknowledgement of Place, Peoples and Culture
   b. Introduction to the Ritual
   c. Lighting of Candles
   d. Scripture and Story
   e. Small group sharing
   f. Feast Day Message
   g. Reflection
   h. Edmund Rice Day 2020 Prayer & Blessing (developed by the global ER Community)
   i. Invocation
2. Edmund Rice Stories
Stories from Edmund Rice people around the world are available on the EREBB website (www.erebb.org/initiative-types/teachers/) website. EREBB School staff are sharing about their current context and the impact the Covid-19 pandemic is having on the people they work with.

3. Action – Letters of Hope
There are many people who are increasingly isolated and vulnerable and many people who are risking their own health on the front line at this time of COVID-19. At just such a time, we are called more and more to serve our community. This is at the heart of what Edmund Rice was about. We invite you to write a letter of hope as an action of love and solidarity towards others.

**Task:**
To create (write, draw, make) a “letter of hope” for people who are experiencing vulnerability in your community or risking their health on the COVID-19 front line.

**Appendix B** is a Task Scaffold that includes the following steps:
1. an opening reflective task,
2. considering who to write to,
3. creating the letter (writing, drawing, making)
4. sharing it on social media, and
5. sending it off.

4. Invitation to EREBB Professional Connection Webinars
Over the next few months, EREBB will host a variety of webinars every two weeks around particular themes, to bring educators together. The webinars will be presented by diverse school leaders, educational experts and people involved in responding during the pandemic. Got to the EREBB Website (www.erebb.org/professional-connection-webinars/) for more information.

**Other Edmund Rice Day Activity Ideas**

- **Contribute to a recording of the Edmund Rice Day 2020 Prayer.**
  Record a person or group of people from your school/ministry reading the ER Day Prayer. You are invited to send one recording from your school/ministry to formation@erea.edu.au by May 15. The collated version will be released by the end of May.

- **What is the Edmund Rice Spirit to you?**
  Each class/ministry collaborate on developing a combined understanding of the Edmund Rice Spirit within their school community/ministry. Record this and develop a combined response from the school/ministry to share at formation@erea.edu.au.

- **Actions of Connection and Service** i.e. School choir to record a song and share to the aged care homes that the school usually visits.
• Creative reflection based upon one of the 2 questions below:
  1. Edmund was called to make the boys on the streets of Waterford his mission when he saw them out his window. What/who do you see out your window? or
  2. Acting in the Spirit of Edmund: who are those in our current context, recognising the need and acting on it.
     • Write a poem
     • Create a drawing or painting
     • Write and perform a spoken word piece
     • Write a song
     • Share your response by taking a photo or using TikTok, Flipgrid or other digital platform.

• Moral and Ethical challenges of COVID-19 and an Edmund Rice response
  Consider the moral and ethical decisions being made by people at this time;
  • the ICU nurse who lives with an elderly parent;
  • Government officials making decisions based on economy vs health;
  • Prime Ministers decreeing schools stay open vs keeping their own children at home.
  Develop a response which explores the relevant positions and present your opinion on how a person who lives guided by the Edmund Rice spirit would respond.

• The Spirit of Edmund in today’s world
  Identify decisions being made that reflect the spirit of Edmund eg people giving up a year’s salary to save an organisation from going under; government ministers not accepting pay rises they were due; big hotels opening their dining rooms to bring people in off the streets for a good meal and a hot shower.
  Analyse why people/organisations are deciding to make these decisions.

• For Edmund, his “essential workers” included a tailor and a baker. In 2020, who are our “essential workers”? 
  Brainstorm all the roles of people working in hospitals, retail, education and food supply including those in highly skilled roles to those who are required to complete more mundane tasks that are vital nonetheless.

• Interview (via phone or video conference) a person whose life has been significantly affected by the example of Edmund Rice:
  • a local Christian Brother,
  • Edmund Rice Ministry volunteer or staff member, or
  • Edmund Rice school staff member
  Find out their Edmund Rice story.

Schools and ministries are invited share some responses to any of these activities with the EREBB community by emailing them to formation@erea.edu.au. They will then be published on the EREBB website and/or social media channels. We ask that schools manage this process of sharing the work rather than individual students emailing it in.

Appendices
Appendix A  Edmund Rice Feast Day Ritual
Appendix B  Letters of Hope Scaffold
Appendix C  Edmund Rice Day Touchstone App Reflections
Appendix D  Safeguarding Considerations
Appendix A - Edmund Rice Feast Day Ritual

Theme: Looking out of my window – with hope

This ritual has been developed to be adaptable to a particular classroom/school/ministry context or can be participated in via one of the Zoom hosted rituals.

This ritual will be conducted twice via Zoom on Tuesday 5 May to enable adults involved in Edmund Rice entities and communities throughout the world to participate. To do so, please email bessie.mutusva@erea.edu.au so that a zoom link and the ritual text can be sent to you. Please specific which of the two rituals you’d like to participate in.

Oceania Focus: Tuesday 5th May at 12.45 AEST (2am GMT)

Global Focus: Tuesday 5th May at 9pm AEST (11am GMT)

Materials Needed for Facilitators
- Ritual Powerpoint (includes the video resources etc)

Materials Needed for Participants
- Each person to have a candle to light.

Ritual Process

1. **Acknowledgement of Place, Peoples and Culture** - pre-arranged voices from each country to welcome participants to their place and way of life, inclusive of (for Oceania) Philippines, PNG, New Zealand, Australia or (for Global) Oceania, North America, South America, India, Africa, Europe.

2. **Introduction to Ritual** - Hosting facilitator’s brief commentary explaining the theme and its importance in current times.

3. **Lighting of Candles**:
   - **Version 1 (Oceania)**: In the hosting space 10 candles – one each to represent the different groups represented as potential participants or people in connection with the spirit of Edmund Rice, namely Christian Brothers, Edmund Rice Ministries Oceania, Edmund Rice Foundation Australia, Edmund Rice Education Australia, MacKillop Services, ER Associated Ministries of Philippines, New Zealand, PNG and Australia, Edmund Rice Regional Movements. As each group is named, and a hosting candle lit, participants connected with that group would be invited to light their individual candle. This personal candle can be retained in the home as a symbol of Hope.

   - **Version 2 (Global)**: Same process as above but naming the different regions of the world in which the work of Edmund Rice continues: South America, North America, Europe, Africa, India, Oceania.

   - **Version 3 (Local)**: If the ritual is being used within a specific community, perhaps a school or ministry, this section could be replicated by using the candles to represent the diversity of the members of the community and its connection with the broader community e.g. a school might name Primary, Middle, Senior Yrs young people, Yr 12s, Boarders (if relevant), Staff, Parents, Old scholars, Christian Brothers, etc. A ministry like Camps might name young campers, older campers, volunteers, staff, partner organisations, funding bodies.

   Text: “Greetings from (place). I am (name) and today I will be lighting this candle as a representative of (name ER organisation/region). As I do so I invite all those who have joined us today as part of (name ER organisation/region) to light their own individual candle in solidarity with the broader Edmund Rice community of the world.”

   Pause .... Chime signifies start of next voice.
4. Scripture and Story

A  Reading of 1 Corinthians 13: 1-8 Love

If I can speak all languages of humans, and even of angels, but have no love, I am just a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have powers to see what others fail to see, and to understand all mysteries and all knowledge, with a faith so strong it can move mountains, but have no love, I remain nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and even give up my body as sacrifice, but still have no love to offer others, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. It is not selfish or irritable or resentful; Love does not keep score of wrongs that others do, but rather rejoices in the truth. 7 Love supports all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends

Reflection Time:
- What is sitting with me from this reading?
- What insight does it bring in this time of physical distancing and heightened health risk?

B  A narrative from Edmunds life

Edmund encountered personal suffering through the death of his beloved wife. In this tragedy he experienced pain, grief and heartache. The joyous, secure and comfortable world he had once known was now visibly shaken. In his words, he described feeling as if half of his own soul was gone. He was left feeling alone, dislocated and vulnerable. In the wake of this event Edmund searched for new meaning. Prayerful reflection and daily Eucharist supported him in this time of uncertainty. But above all, it was his baby daughter, growing and developing, that awakened him to new possibilities for expressing love, tenderness and care. Perhaps, it was this experience, born out of crisis, that opened his eyes and heart to see beauty and possibility in the faces of those who were so often forgotten and ignored by the community around him. It certainly offered him a new perspective from which to act! But like most of us, Edmund needed a purposeful nudge to get him to take that final step into action. When sharing his thoughts about potentially leaving Waterford to join a secluded Monastery, a valued woman friend led him to the window, threw back the curtains and, pointing to the streets of unruly young boys below, declared “Can you see, Mr Rice – there is your Monastery in the streets”. From that moment, Edmund’s view from his window, motivated his work to bring hope to the lives of those young boys.

5. Chat Groups – Groups of 3

Discussion questions: What meaning do these stories have for you? What are you seeing as you look through your window of hope?
6. **Feast Day message** Brief (90 second video clips) – voices of hope
   
   a. Br Peter Clinch (Oceania Province Leader)
   b. Andre Brown (Edmund Rice Ministries Oceania)
   c. Wayne Tinsey (Edmund Rice Education Australia)

7. **Reflection** – Video clip: Hallelujah (Free Hugs) Italy
   
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsN_PeuuJP8
   A reminder of the gift of human touch at a time of imposed physical distancing.

8. **Common Prayer and Blessing** – Written by collective and read by diverse (pre-arranged) voices

   Creator God, on this special day of celebrating the vision and work of Edmund Rice, we pray as one.

   Help us to look out our window and see those most in need in our community. Let us clean our own lens so that we look out through love, with love and to love. Bring clarity to our vision and purpose to our action.

   Inspire us to always choose courage over comfort, choosing for the good of all, not some. Guide us to pay attention to the personal story of each individual, fostering the respect, honesty and compassion that help transform lives. Help us to always remember that providence is our inheritance.

   For Edmund and for us, precious moments are experienced in our ordinary encounters. Here we get a glimpse of the extraordinary that we can store in our hearts and share at any time. Through these moments may we stay connected to you, our loving Creator, and give generously from what we have for the good of others.

   *May we, in each of our own families and communities continue to enjoy the prayerful quiet and resolve learned over the past few weeks.*

   *May we, in each of our own families and communities, be open to the spirit of Blessed Edmund moving in our midst to bring simplicity, humour, humility and warmth to the relationships we share.*

9. **Invocation**

   Blessed Edmund – **All: Pray for us**

   Live Jesus in our Hearts – **All: Forever**
Appendix B – Letters of Hope

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5. sending it off.

Step 1:
Reflection Questions:

a. Looking out my window... what am I seeing for the first time or seeing differently?

b. If hope is “seeing love in the midst of suffering and crisis”, what is giving me hope in this time of Covid-19.

c. Who are the people experiencing vulnerability in your community (e.g. elderly, healthcare workers, Indigenous peoples)

Step 2:
Select who you will write the letter to:

- People you know (grandparent, elderly neighbour, relative who is a health care worker)
- Groups/organisations your school/ministry works with or has connections to (residents at aged-care homes the school would usually visit, a remote community the school has a relationship with, local Vinnies groups, or hospital wards).

Step 3:
Write your letter (or make or draw) using the scaffold below as a guide.

Greeting:
Dear ...........

Body:
I have been thinking of you because...
Outside my window, I see....
I see love/hope during this crisis when...
I am grateful for...

Closing:
I wish you...

Step 4:
Take a photo of your letter and share it on your social media with the hashtag #ERlettersofhope and #EREBB.

Step 5:
Put your letter/card/drawing in an envelope and send it to your chosen recipient.
India is home to more than 19% of the world's children, while it is estimated that around 170 million or 40% of India's children are vulnerable or experiencing difficult circumstances characterised by their specific social, economic and geo-political situations.
What have young people, inspired by the stories of Edmund, Jesus and others, done about this?

The Nine is Mine campaign is a children’s advocacy campaign that seeks the fulfillment of education for all, an end to gender discrimination and a reduction in child mortality. It is an initiative of children by children and for children to claim their right to be heard and their right to participation even in governance. The campaign began in India in response to Nelson Mandela’s call to every ordinary citizen to hold the government accountable to their commitment “to end poverty and social exclusion.”
The children of India took it upon themselves to demand that India allocate 6% of GDP on Education and 3% on health; hence “Nine is Mine”.

May 5 is the feast of Edmund Ignatius Rice. It is a day to recall the gift of his response to young people who had been disadvantaged by systems and structures that create and maintain exclusion and poverty.
How does the Nine is Mine project continue Edmund's legacy?
How might you work for Justice with the young people in your community in Solidarity with the young people of India?
Inclusive Community

New Street

Reflecting Read the text slowly. Allow the words to speak to you. Linger on a word or image.

The stables at New Street [site of Edmund’s first school] were not slums, for this was where the gentry stabled their horses and coaches, their most expensive commodities, second only to their homes. While this was not luxury, the children’s new school was so much superior to most of Waterford’s charity and indeed most pay schools. This was a deliberate choice, reflecting Rice’s respect for the dignity of poor children. He was not going to educate them in “miserable garrets”, or “miserable hovels” as the commissioners of education described so many of Waterford's pay schools.

Deepening As you read the next text, think about what it adds to the first. Where does it take you now?

[Edmund’s] school for the rejects of society was opened in the same area where those who were the pinnacle of society lived. This seems hardly an accident. He was welcoming these urchins, God’s gentry, into this salubrious, residential area as having a right to be there. Given such provocative action, it was “but natural to expect that the inhabitants objected to his boys”. From its very genesis Rice’s education was challenging and subversive. It deliberately attacked the class system that allocated people for life into categories set for them by convention or by those with influence and power. Rice welcomed these children into his society as his guests, having a right to be there because of the common humanity all shared.

(John McLaughlin)

Responding What is this time of reflection and prayer leading you to do now?

What do Denis McLaughlin’s reflections on the choice of New Street as the location for Edmund’s first school reveal about the nature of the education he sought to provide and the community he created?

Why is the dignity of all people, particularly those affected by poverty, an essential element of Inclusive Community?

In what ways are our school communities provocative, challenging and subversive, when it comes to being inclusive?

Published on the EREA Touchstones APP – Sunday 26 April 2020 (All pictures by Mark Walsh)
Appendix D – Safeguarding Considerations

The inclusion of all Edmund Rice communities across the globe is essential as we gather to remember, celebrate and give life to the founding inspiration of our charism. As we do so, it is important that we all strive to provide a safety for those who participate.

Knowing that there are different safeguarding requirements in different geographical and ministry contexts, we recommend that if you choose to utilise the resources within this package you do so in a way that meets the requirements of local safeguarding practises.

Should you choose to use Zoom with your students in making use of this package, you might want to refer to this handy blog about the safety features you can activate.

Joining the online Edmund Rice Feast Day Ritual on Zoom

A ritual to commemorate the Edmund Rice Feast Day will be conducted online twice via Zoom on Tuesday 5th May:

Oceania Focus: Tuesday 5th May at 12.45am AEST (2am GMT)

Global Focus: Tuesday 5th May at 9pm AEST (11am GMT)

Adult members of Edmund Rice Communities across the globe are invited to join one of the rituals live via a Zoom meeting. A recording of the ritual will be circulated at a later date which you may wish to share with others in your Edmund Rice community.

In accepting the invitation to join the Ritual via Zoom, you are agreeing to:
- participate in a global online meeting, and
- being recorded as part of a Zoom meeting knowing that the recording will be shared, which may include, but is not limited to, social media platforms.