

STAFF IMMERSION



Edmund Rice Network England
to
South Africa
summer 2023



PRESENCE

**COMPASSION
LIBERATION**



For 20 years Edmund Rice Schools have provided opportunities for both staff and students to connect with communities in the developing world.

The Immersion programmes reflect our mission as Catholic schools and are a unique and inspirational expression of the Edmund Rice ethos.

Our newest initiative began in summer 2023 to develop links with the Edmund Rice projects, schools and ministries in South Africa where we forged relationships of radical solidarity, mutual affirmation and friendship with people made poor.

SAYING 'YES' TO OPPORTUNITY

RE Staff from two Edmund Rice schools, Ann-Marie Engelbrecht from St Mary's College and Hollie Gordon from Aidan's Catholic Academy took up the challenge.



We began our adventure in and around Pretoria

The first thing that you notice when on Immersion is the welcome; there is nothing quite like an African welcome. That welcome is warm, genuine but also grand. You are truly made to feel welcome, at home, at ease... you, just you, you are this special.

The second thing you notice is there is Brotherhood and sisterhood. That we actually are all connected : by profession and by Faith: we are family, we are colleagues in a global network . Then it hits you there are more of "Us" and not just me and my school, back in Crosby on my own . It really feels like a family welcome when you visit fellow CBC Schools.



CBC MOUNT EDMUND

We were kindly hosted by CBC Edmund School

What a joy and pleasure it was for us in South Africa, to host you. Hollie and Ann Marie for your visit to our beautiful country. It's not everyday that we get to engage with colleagues from the Edmund Rice network from other parts of the world. Thank you for sharing with us the work that you are doing in England. I hope that sharing our time and work with you at our school and in the neighbouring communities was enlightening.

Bernard Langton
College Principal
CBC Mount Edmund



CBC MOUNT EDMUND



NEW FRIENDS

'We are more alike than we are unlike'.

This was the highlight of my time spent with Ann, Ann Marie and Hollie.

Through conversations that ranged from daily experiences with young people in the school space to personal experiences of life, family and womanhood. I experienced a connection with diversity by connecting with others. A lot of how we do things was different, but the why was the same. It was again another remind to remain open to new experiences, ideas & perspectives in order to have a deeper empathy and a better understanding for the work that I do.

Annah Gavure - Wellbeing Coordinator, Mount Edmund





A SHARED IDENTITY

We worked with groups delivering workshops on the Edmund Rice Network, on EREBB, on leadership, on our Edmund Rice values.



MAMELODI

Mamelodi, is a township set up by the then apartheid government northeast of Pretoria. It has a long and painful history of resistance to apartheid, it is the second biggest township or 'informal settlement' in South Africa.



LEARNING

CBC Mount Edmund fund a toy library in Mamelodi and also support an Early Years nursery school.

Providing good standard Nursery and Pre-school education in a context such as Mamelodi is transformational for the community; children are looked after & prepared for primary education, young (often single) mothers can work and help their families out of poverty as well as empowering themselves. It also provides much needed jobs for women.

MAMELODI



We were so moved by Mabel's work establishing 'Little Cherubim's Ark Preschool' that we intend to fundraise for 2 extra classrooms this year.

WHY IMMERSION?



Common Commitment

- Our contact together certainly highlighted our common commitment and investment in promoting Edmund Rice education and finding new ways to advance what is our common ethos. Our discussions were honest and insightful and created a platform for future contact, sharing and support.



Enriching the Network

- We enrich our Edmund Rice Network when we engage with like-minded educators from across the globe. Embracing heart connections not only deepens the charism of Edmund Rice in the lives of teachers, this inspired outlook then further improves the educational experiences for students.



Sharing Good Practice & Receiving New Ideas

- Thank you for sharing with us the work that you are doing in England. I hope that sharing our time and work with you at our school and in the neighbouring communities was enlightening.
- Ann did an amazing leadership workshop with our Grade 11 students which got them thinking about their roles as leaders next year. She also shared the work Edmund Rice England does.
- Our staff got to engage with and build on the Edmund Rice charism, sharing ideas with others in the Edmund Rice family. I certainly have gained many new ideas to take back to the boys of CBC Boksburg.



Personal Growth

- Immersion helped me to walk to a new height and to fight my own personal fears.
- Experiencing life in the townships was a challenging, and impactful experience that will remain with me forever.

EDMUND RICE
SCHOOLS

SOUTH
AFRICA



CBC BOKSBURG VERITAS COLLEGE

What I'd like to share & takeaway from this experience is that service for schools, connections and shared ideas are paramount to our global community. To be able to take pupils or staff across the world or to host touring fellow schools really keeps the Edmund Rice Network alive.

EDMUND RICE
SCHOOLS

SOUTH
AFRICA



CBC ST JOHN'S

CBC St John's has been blessed by the visitors we have encountered from around the world, including Ann and Holly, who each bring a unique perspective of the Edmund Rice Family. This has further opened opportunities for our own staff and students to expand their understanding of our global family. This heightened spirit of collaboration has the power to unite our students and inspire lasting change.

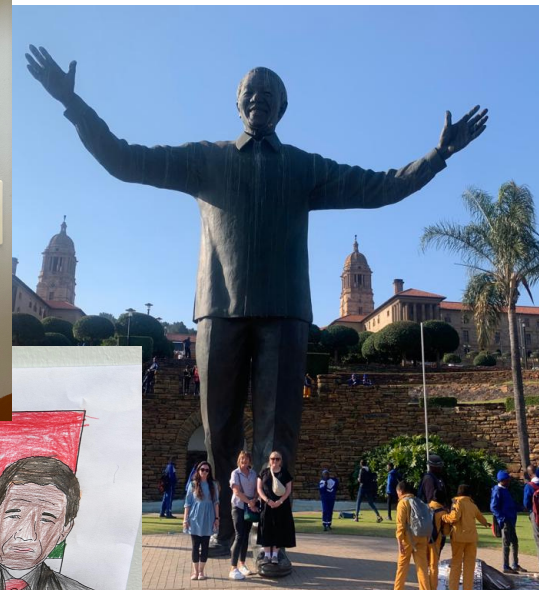
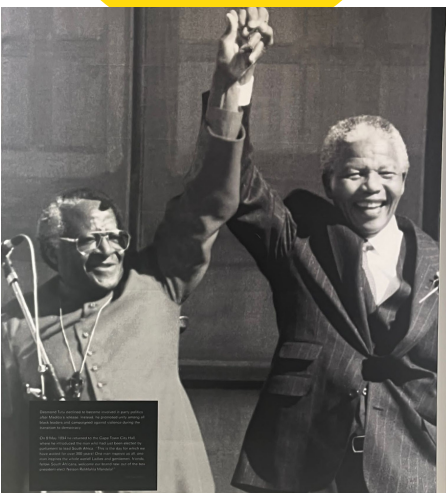
SOUTH AFRICA TODAY

THE RAINBOW NATION?

Learning about and experiencing South African society today, first hand, really taught us about its history, its challenges and the lasting impact of the Apartheid system. The 'Rainbow Nation' is a complex, diverse, determined, & wonderful country where the largest disparity between the rich and poor can be largely hidden if visiting as a passing tourist.



**Madiba's
legacy**



SOWETO

Br Mike De Klerk accompanied us to Soweto. Visiting his former school, Immaculata Secondary School, the Hector Pietersen Memorial, Apartheid Museum and Regina Mundi Church we learned a lot about the history and actuality of life in the most famous of South Africa's townships and the home of both Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu.



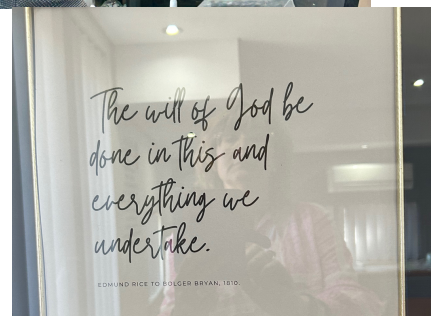
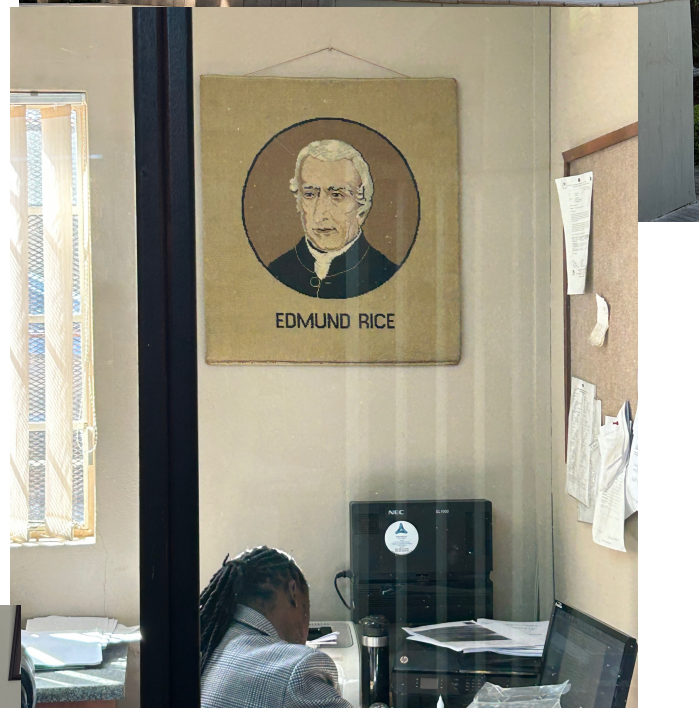
Br Mike's legacy in the school is strong! A former young teacher he recruited to the school and mentored is now Principal. We were impressed to discover that the matriculation rate at Immaculata is 97%.



ENCOUNTERING SOUTH AFRICA

EDMUND RICE

IN



CBC RETREAT CENTRE, STELLENBOSCH
IMMACULATA SCHOOL, SOWETO,
CBC MOUNT EDMUND, PRETORIA
CBC ST JOHN'S, CAPE TOWN

CHRIST AT THE CENTRE IMMERSION SOUTH AFRICA



JUSTICE DESK AFRICA

Learning how the Charism of Edmund Rice is lived by the NPO Justice Desk Africa is a highlight of the immersion. Living & working with the JDA team for more than a week, taking part in their programs, getting to know the amazing staff, program participants and interns will lead to exciting new connections & have a lasting impact on the UK network.





Justice Desk Africa

A Human Rights NPO

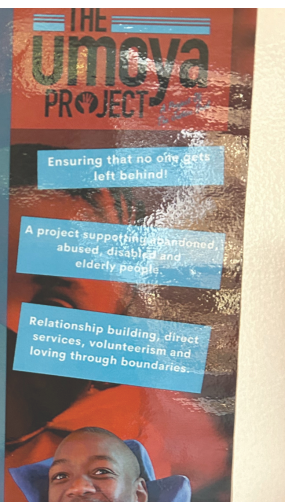


project that focuses on the rights of disabled, abandoned and elderly people. It operates out of the Missionaries of Charity home in the township of Khayelitsha, and has been running for over 8 years. Since the beginning of this project we have worked with over 1800 mentally and physically disabled, elderly, abandoned, abused and sickly people. Our residents come from various underprivileged communities across South Africa and many have been completely abandoned and forgotten.

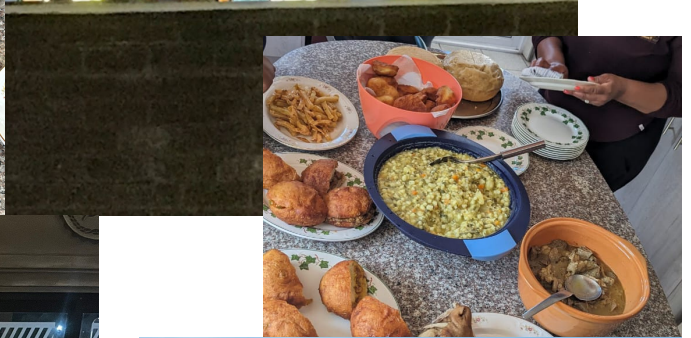
The project has two key components, firstly, relationship building and secondly, direct services.

Relationship building: This is done through a wide range of exciting and interactive activities for the residents and volunteers to enjoy together. These activities include movie days, pamper sessions, arts and crafts, exercise, dance lessons, bead work, art work, gardening, and many others. The purpose of each activity is to facilitate the opportunity for residents and volunteers to build deep and meaningful relationships.

Direct services: Support and other needed services include coordinating physiotherapy, assisting in establishing vegetable gardens, delivering water and food, infrastructure upkeep and funeral support. During Covid-19 we ensured that all of our residents had all of the personal protective gear and food needed to last throughout the lockdown.



FOOD & SOUTH AFRICA CULTURE





South

Beauty
Nature
Landcape
Coast
Wildlife

Africa