



PRESENCE

The voice of Edmund's people in the English Network



"We must restore hope to young people, help the old,
be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor.
We need to include the excluded and preach peace."

Pope Francis



With teachers from our Edmund Rice schools across West and East Africa outside O'Connell Street School, Dublin.

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‘Adelante!’ (Go ahead, get on with it!)

This word, spoken in his native Spanish, by Pope Francis repeatedly during an encounter with His Holiness we were lucky enough to attend a few weeks ago, has been resounding in my ears ever since.

His gentle encouragement of the young people he was interacting with, young people involved in his Scholas Occurrentes organisation, who are working on social initiatives to improve their communities and bring about positive, fundamental change towards a fairer and more sustainable future has truly spurred me on in my own work.

Encouraging members of our Edmund Rice schools to see the ‘bigger picture’, to walk with and advocate for those on the margins, to adopt an open and present attitude of encounter and to above all be courageous in our compassionate approach is fundamental to my role. I am therefore excited about the prospect of our EREBB agreement with Scholas Occurrentes, to be able to, as young people of the church, work together, exchanging experiences and initiatives from the perspective of integral ecology with a focus on sustainable development.

Early planning of this project is underway, and we look forward to involving many of our students and staff in the coming months. This term has been an intense and busy one, with many important events such as the EREBB Congress in Dublin, Heads’ Retreat, Student Leadership Conference, Induction Program for new staff and governors, Staff visit to the United Nations and the Edmund Rice Junior Awards celebration day; each in its own way an energising experience where the living, breathing spirit of Blessed Edmund has been clearly manifest.

So, as we head into the summer holidays and our new staff immersion adventure in South Africa begins, and you all break for your own summer exploits, I leave you with this rallying cry - ‘Adelante!’

Ann Nichols
Network Facilitator



As we approach the end of another exciting and grace filled academic year it is good to reflect on all that has been achieved.

Being able to meet together, in person, whether as students or staff, has been a joy. Formation programmes with staff, pupils and governors, leadership training with our senior student leadership teams, Edmund Rice Awards with the junior school students, domestic and international immersions, social justice campaigns, etc have all been truly amazing this year.

Our schools and our Network respond to every challenge to “act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly.”

Our connection with the rest of the Edmund Rice network is beyond compare and it was great to attend the Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders Congress in Dublin, in May, to reconnect with so many from across the world; from Ireland, from South Africa, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Australia, from South and North America, from India, from Kenya; to meet old and new friends; to spend time with ERI, the Justice desk from South Africa, Edmund Rice Development, and so many more. Together we are truly “educating with hope in our hearts and hands.”

The highlight of the year has been the time Ann and I got to spend with Pope Francis, travelling to Rome with two wonderful young people, Dylan from St Anselm’s College, and Zara from St Joseph’s College. It was inspiring listening to the words of Francis encouraging us to provide the roots for our young people so that they can dream, as he said, “without those roots they cannot dream.”

Learning about his dream of Scholas Occurrentes, which he created to promote a new education with a mission to create a culture of encounter, was humbling and inspiring. It will be wonderful to see how our own network becomes part of this other great international organisation.

We are blessed with the support of our Trustees and those around us in our Network. We have much to give thanks for but also still much to do, but together we can do it; we can change the world for the better for all, reaching out to those made poor and those living on the margins, ensuring that those whose voice doesn’t get heard, is heard at the highest level.

We need to continue to challenge the systems which keep people poor, and we need to raise our voices especially on behalf of the homeless, the refugee and those living in poverty. As Pope Francis has said, “the future starts today, not tomorrow” and he challenges us to “learn always to look towards the horizon, to always look beyond” and to do all we can to ensure that we are helping the young people in our care to “stakes themselves on noble ideas and courageously be ready to be the saints of the new millennium.” Thank you for all you do in this Network and for your continued support for the work of the Edmund Rice Office.

Rosin Maguire
Director of the English Schools Office

As the school year nears the end, may you look back in gratefulness for all that has been.

It has been a particularly significant year, as all the preparatory work in recent years is coming to fruition with the formal launching of the Gaudete Trust next month. Congratulations to the Office team who have been key to the development of the project to date.

Even though the Gaudete Trust involves several religious congregations there is a determination to preserve the charism of each congregation. The recent EREBB (Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders) Conference held in Dublin recently was further evidence of the value and relevance of the Edmund Rice charism in the world of today.

You, teachers, are entrusted with a vital mission of guiding and shaping the lives of the young people in our schools. As we Brothers increase in age and diminish in number we are inspired by the stories of dedication and love we hear from the schools, in both formal reports and anecdotal evidence. We offer you our heartfelt thanks and pray that you may be continually inspired by the vision of Edmund Rice. May his saying that “ Providence is our Inheritance” strengthen your faith always.

James Donovan, Deputy Province Leader.



In June we were delighted to hold our annual Sixth Form Student Leadership Conference at the Village Hotel on the Wirral.

With the theme ‘Responding to the Call,’ focus was very much on how, as Edmund’s people, the newly chosen student leaders in our secondary schools are asked to lead their community’s response to injustice.

A packed day, with three key presenters, meant that students were really kept busy. They also had a chance to get to know one another with fun ice-breaker activities led by ERO team member Shannon Oates. Sharing ideas on student leadership and on effective social justice activities that are already in practice in their schools was also a key part to this joint learning experience. Prior to attending, students completed a questionnaire about their hopes for the coming year as leaders in their schools, on their chief concerns in the wider world, and in their own communities - they also watched the Edmund Rice Schools Global Student Leadership video.

(See QR code below to watch this)

Our three areas of focus on the day (and for our Social Justice Action Plan going forward) were Child Poverty in the UK ([#EREndChildPoverty](#)), creating sustainable schools by implementing the Edmund Rice schools Earth Pledge ([#ERSchoolsEarthPledge](#)) and demonstrating a compassionate approach to those seeking asylum and refuge ([#ERTogtherWithRefugees](#)).

We extend our sincere thanks to presenters Rachel Walters of the End Child Poverty Coalition, Br Kevin Cawley from ERI in New York and Asylum Link Merseyside’s Centre manager, Ewan Roberts for their insightful and motivating input on the day. Students, in the school groups spent some time action-planning and presenting ideas of how they would like to lead their response to the injustices discussed at the conference. We look forward to seeing their creative advocacy projects come to fruition. Br Dominic Sassi accompanied us on the day and led a closing ritual which involved anointing the hands of the new leaders, sending them out to be Christ’s hands on Earth.



Year 6 Edmund Rice Awards

“it was a wonderful day and so good to see all of the schools together. It was lovely to see how the children have benefitted from the awrds and we hope it will inspire them to go on to great things.





SOCIAL JUSTICE & ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN

for schools

#EREndChildPoverty

Concentrating on SDG#1 No Poverty & SDG #2 Zero Hunger we will campaign to end child poverty & food insecurity in our own communities.

Declaration of Human Rights - article 25
Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and of their family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child article 27 (adequate standard of living)
Every child has the right to a decent standard of living to enable them to grow and develop... (nutrition, clothing and housing.)



#ERSchoolsEarthPledge

We will ensure our schools work towards enforcing the 5 Earth Pledge Commitments to create environmentally responsible Edmund Rice schools and communities

SDG #7 Clean Energy... SDG #11 Sustainable Communities... SDG #12 Responsible Consumption...
#SDG 13 Climate Action

#ERTogtherWithRefugees

Demonstrate a compassionate approach to those seeking asylum and refuge. Build solidarity with refugees. Call for a kinder, fairer migration system.

Declaration of Human Rights - article 14
Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.



Gabriel, a student from St Ambrose College has written his response to the day:

On the 6th of June, myself and two other members of the Sixth Form Leadership team travelled to The Wirral, to attend a conference “Exploring Leadership in an Edmund Rice Context”.

During the conference we met numerous other like-minded students from other schools and collectively discussed topics such as climate change, child poverty and refugees.

Although these discussions can be daunting, we were led by experts from around the world, who stressed the importance of a response based on advocacy and teamwork.

I was particularly interested in the injustices of the systems and processes relating to asylum seekers and how the press misrepresents these displaced people, leading to lazy stereotypes, which I am sure many of us pictured before the conference.

The key messages that we learnt from our discussions was that these problems cannot be tackled alone; however, by coming together from different schools and communities, we can truly make change and that is what the conference was all about. It is too easy to put these problems behind us and bury our heads in the sand, therefore, before we left, we were challenged to think of practical solutions which we can implement once we returned to our schools - one possible goal for our leaderships team is to visit communities of refugees to interact and learn from their experience and to help where we can.

It will not be easy, but the definition of advocacy is stirring things up, not settling down.



This year for the first time Edmund Rice Schools, England brought their chaplains together for a retreat day.

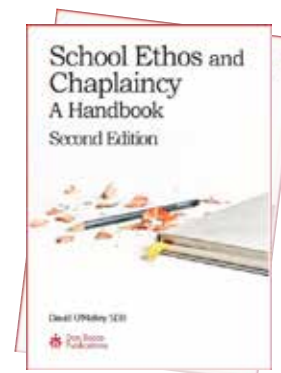
Our beautiful warm summer's day at Wistaston Hall, kindly led by Fr David O'Malley SDB was spent reflecting on our roles in school and how chaplaincy is a whole school responsibility.

We also considered how our Religious Order Charism informs and underpins the life of our schools and how Chaplains can embody this. We were also joined by close partner schools, St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy and St Thomas More Catholic Academy.

Our Chaplains left the event feeling affirmed by the discussion opportunities around the common needs and struggles in school; knowing that they are not alone and were also impacted by the in-depth discussions on how chaplaincy is being 'done' by many people in multiple areas of the school.

Father O'Malley has written extensively on Chaplaincy in Catholic Schools and on Charism development. David O'Malley's book is being used by Chaplaincy teams in our Edmund Rice schools.

www.salesians.org.uk/bookshop/1187





This year’s annual Head’s Retreat saw us return to Wistaston Hall to gather as a group with our Network friends as well as Principals. This year’s facilitator was Fr David O’Malley SDB, our great friend through ROE.

We opened with a reflection based on gratitude and how this can positively influence our decisions as leaders. We considered our inner lives; how each of us is a mixture of positive, creative energy that drives us forward and the defensive, insecure self that can hold us back.

Focussing on Presence, Compassion and Liberation, we considered how Blessed Edmund liberated through education, was present to those he helped and the compassionate, feminine aspect of God.

Our day was concluded with a beautiful dinner at Rookery Hall Hotel, a chance for friends to relax and be together as Edmund’s people.

Our Headteacher’s were affirmed by the solidarity of their colleagues and by Fr David’s kindness, by the empathy of all participants, and by the unity of our Edmund Rice school community. They enjoyed a chance to reflect and digest presentations in Emmaus-style walks with colleagues.

We are hoping to hold our retreat in Knock, Ireland next year.

To be able to gather again as a global community has been one of the highlights of our year.

To witness the global Edmund Rice family returning to Edmund’s home country, to the source of our Charism, was very moving.

After many overseas educators had been on pre-congress visits to schools around Ireland and on pilgrimage to Waterford and Callan, our office team joined them at Marino, where, in the Chapel, we considered the role of the young Brothers who sailed out, along the Liffey to establish many of the communities that had returned all these years later to gather and share ideas on delivering a quality education in the Edmund Rice tradition.

The Congress was held at Dublin City University, hosted by EREBB and the Edmund Rice Schools Trust, Ireland. We enjoyed the warm hospitality and culture of the Irish throughout the congress with music from the local Edmund Rice schools, traditional food, reflections in Irish and Irish dancing.

This congress was an opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones, from all corners of the globe whilst discussing the key issues in our schools and communities today. We heard from inspiring speakers about Edmund Rice, our environment and being sustainable schools, the director of Scholas Occurrentes amongst others.

It was great to network face-to-face and forge new links, our friendships made at Congress will develop into long-term global partnerships that will enhance the education of our young people.

We are truly blessed to be brothers and sisters of this global village.



This year, EREBB has been fortunate to enter into a relationship with Pope Francis' educational movement - Scholas Occurrentes. Scholas, established a decade ago in Buenos Aires, is now a multinational movement of collaborative programs that promote a new education, its mission is to create a culture of encounter bringing young people closer together to share their problems and to collectively seek new solutions.

Our own project with Scholas will be based on educational actions for sustainable development, inspired by Laudato Si and specifically with integral ecology ideas at its core.

A plan for the project is underway and we look forward to involving students and staff from across the world in our EREBB -Scholas project over the coming months.

Thanks to our partnership with Scholas, the Edmund Rice Office team were invited to bring two students to Rome in May to a Scholas 10-year anniversary celebration event which meant for us, a wonderful encounter with his Holiness.



Dylan Rumsby, a Year 12 student from St Anselm's College (and featured on the front cover) here gives his account of the meeting.

On 25th May, I was privileged to have the opportunity to have an encounter with Pope Francis in the Vatican City. This opportunity arose from the Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders recent invitation to join 'Scholas Occurrentes' (a worldwide network established by Pope Francis to promote a new education, and its mission is to create a culture of encounter bringing young people closer to a meaningful education).

Along with Ann, Roisin and fellow Edmund Rice student, Zara from St Joseph's College. I arrived at Manchester Airport at 5:30 am for a short flight to Rome, followed by a taxi to our accommodation. We dropped our bags off and went for a much needed lunch stop, followed by a brisk tour of the outside of the Vatican where we were all astonished by the architecture, statues and queues for St Peter's Basilica. After our exploration, we got ready for our audience with His Holiness at the Augustinianum Patristic Institute.

When we arrived at the Institute along with Mayors from across South America and many more people, we were still unaware of the extent of the intimacy our 'encounter' with His Holiness would involve but we were greeted with a lanyard with our name and shown to our seats. Pope Francis entered and filled the room with an unexplainable aura and began talking to people from all over the globe via video calls, answering any questions with loving, thoughtful responses, from which I have learnt many lessons. It was after these conversations that we eagerly realised that there was a procession past the Holy Father and a chance to shake hands and exchange a few words.

Following the South American Mayors and other guests, it was our turn to encounter His Holiness and bearing my Great Grandmother's 100-year-old rosary beads, we processed past him. I offered the beads to be blessed by the Holy Father and he did without hesitation and said, 'Pray for me', we shook hands and then the encounter was complete. However, when I walked away, I was unable to recall the feeling of his hands leading to an almost surreal and unforgettable experience.

We were gifted scented, blessed, rosary beads on departure before we spoke to the President of the Pontificia Scholas Occurrentes who had a lot of time for us. We thanked him for the experience.

Following this, we went for another memorable experience - having dinner at the Christian Brothers' house in Rome with brothers from all cultures, who greeted us with an exceptionally warm welcome and I felt at home. Dinner was followed by taking in the view on the balcony and long conversations in the sitting room about previous and future emersion trips, especially to Sierra Leone, which I am fortunate enough to be taking part in next February where we visit St Joseph's in Freetown.

I will cherish the lessons and memories I have received from this trip forever and they have improved my approach to life, and others around me and I am extremely grateful for this opportunity.



Zara Weldon, Year 12 student from St Joseph's College and newly appointed head student also accompanied us to Rome.

I felt so privileged to be offered this fantastic opportunity, to not only represent St Joseph's College, but also to represent Edmund Rice Schools England. To meet His Holiness, The Pope, was an amazing 'once in a lifetime' experience, but I was also really interested to learn more about Scholas Occurrentes.

Attending the ten-year anniversary conference helped me understand The Pope's idea of creating a culture for encounter and bringing young people closer together. To see how Scholas has already improved the lives of many young people through art, sport and social events, has certainly inspired me to continue this through our community at St Joseph's College.



www.scholasoccurrentes.org/en/

We were pleased to host Miss Azul Pasman, a teacher from Cardinal Newman College in Buenos Aires this April, as she spent her sabbatical looking at education across Europe.

She was kindly welcomed by St Joseph's College and Prep, St Ambrose College and Prep and St Anselm's College. The Brothers at 'Woodeaves' enjoyed Azul's wonderful, lively company.

Here is Azul's account of her time in England:

Last April I had the great experience of staying fifteen days in England and visiting some schools of the Edmund Rice Network. I attended Saint Ambrose College, Saint Ambrose Preparatory School, Loreto Grammar School, Saint Joseph's College, Saint Joseph Preparatory School and Saint Anselm's College. It was very interesting observing the different ways students learn and how the schools work.

I had the opportunity to observe many lessons and to learn from other colleagues. It was lovely to exchange with them different ways of teaching and thinking together, which is the best way to educate young people to build a better world.

I was also able to feel in each institution the Edmund Rice charisma. Love and respect for others is very important in all of the schools. Solidarity is also a very present value in all of the students.

It was very nice to listen to the experience of some students that participated in an immersion in Africa. In all schools, pupils are very conscious of the importance of taking care of our planet.

Headteachers, teachers and students were very kind and made me feel at home. I really liked meeting them.

I also very much enjoyed staying at 'Woodeaves' with the Brothers and sharing time with them.

I'm very thankful to all the people that made this experience possible.



In June we hosted our second induction day for staff and governors who have recently taken up post in one of the schools.

Staff and governors joined us from our primary and secondary schools, and from a variety of roles.

We welcomed everyone on a very warm day at 'Woodeaves', spending the morning discussing the Edmund Rice story, the Christian Brothers legacy in our schools and how the Eight Essentials are currently being lived out on our schools.

Followed by lunch at the local pub, (a real treat on a school day for the participants!) Brother Ger joined us to tell his 'story', a snapshot of the life he has led and continues to lead as a Christian Brother. Lastly, we presented opportunities that are open to those joining our Edmund Rice family. We very much enjoyed the company of such an engaged group.

Participants left feeling "much more knowledgeable about and keen to be involved in the network" also "supported and inspired."





On Sunday 28th June, we hosted our first joint camp co-ordinators training programme at 'Woodeaves' where we were joined by co-ordinators from each of the four camps running this summer: St Ambrose, St Anselm's, St Edward's, and St Joseph's.

Out of the seven co-ordinators who were able to join us at 'Woodeaves', four were new to the role and took the training afternoon in their stride. Bringing all four camp co-ordinators together (both new and experienced) served the purpose of being able to collaborate across camps and to share new ideas, resources and best practice.

The co-ordinators really engaged with how to progress with camps, what opportunities they can offer to the children, and how we ensure the development of leaders over the week - outlining concrete plans of action building up to the end of July.

It was a really excellent, positive afternoon, and we were impressed by the enthusiasm of our co-ordinators and the passion they bring to making sure Edmund Rice Camps can run so successfully.

We cannot wait to see how successful Edmund Rice Camps are this summer and how much of a difference our young leaders and co-ordinators make to the lives of so many children across the Northwest.

Shannon Oates, Camps Organiser

On Sunday 28th June, we hosted our first joint camp co-ordinators training programme at 'Woodeaves' where we were joined by co-ordinators from each of the four camps running this summer: St Ambrose, St Anselm's, St Edward's, and St Joseph's.

On 6t June I took part in the Edmund Rice camp training day. It was an insightful fun filled day full of team building exercises and knowledge boosters to prepare us for the camp later this summer. I'm super excited to be meeting new people and helping children in the local community.

I am also super grateful and fortunate that the Edmund Rice Network can offer these opportunities not only to us as Sixth Form students but to younger children from surrounding areas. On the training day we were able to meet the Edmund Rice team that will be helping us plan out the week of camp and also our fellow sixth form students from Upton Hall School that we will be working with at camp!

Tom Jones, Year 12 student, St Anselm's College



Rejoice



A great deal of work continues to be done in relation to both the Gaudete Trust and the Laetare CMAT.

There will be a commissioning service on 11th July at St Paul's School for Girls, in Birmingham, to mark the Religious Orders commissioning the Gaudete Trust to take responsibility for the Trusteeship of their schools.

On 19th October, there will then be a Launch Day for schools, to mark the transfer of the schools into the Gaudete Trust.

This is an exciting time for our schools, who will become part of a strong, supportive, and inspiring group of schools, so that together we can honour, protect, preserve, support, and enhance the distinctive charism of each school.

It will be a means to collectively secure and develop Catholic education and to safeguard the future of our Religious Order schools.

The first consultation on the Laetare CMAT has been completed and we now have our first group of Pathfinder schools who will work on the detail of the CMAT. The steering group will continue as a consultative body to support in the formation of the CMAT.

These are exciting times for our schools. We are stronger together and we have much to share.





This year's focus for the Charism group from Religious Orders in Education has been on chaplaincy.

We have started an online forum which we will host each term, allowing chaplains and chaplaincy staff to get together, share experiences and resources. We have held two sessions so far, look out on the ROE website for further dates.

Our year's collaborative work culminated with our Chaplin's Conference. We were excited to gather and look at chaplaincy through the lens of our charisms. We also delved into the new CIS Framework and looked at how our charisms inform the SEF.

We are delighted that our third phase of Global Classroom Partners has begun.

We look forward to connecting classes, student, and staff leaders over the coming months.




ROE Chaplains' Conference
'Developing Chaplaincy through our Charisms'

- for all those involved in Chaplaincy & Leadership in RO schools
- more than 1 delegate encouraged to attend per school
- £50 per school

St Aloysius Parish Centre, Euston London
June 27 2023

Each delegate to register by [Google Form](#)

all enquiries: annnichols.roe@gmail.com



Michael has done a great job de-cluttering the house prior to its imminent sale.
Edward has lost a tooth, had a canal job on its neighbour and a new cataract.

Edward attended the Links (Justice, Peace & the Integrity of Creation) AGM in Herts. 19th-21st May, where a wonderful speaker, Dorothy Guerrero from 'Global Justice Now' gave very informative sessions on Loss and Damage in poor countries caused by Climate Change, and the need for reparations. The changes in our climate that that are happening now have been caused by the colonial exploitation of the past and the neo-liberal trans-national companies of today.

The latter are often more powerful than nation states and through the International Trade Court they can sue governments for billions of dollars if they try to renege on nuclear power plants, or big dam construction, or try to nationalise industries.

Also, poor countries face the dilemma of preserving their ecology or increasing economic activity to improve their people's welfare. Ecuador has promised to keep its oil in the ground but this demands compensation from other countries. Cambodia is keen to increase manufacturing exports in order to increase prosperity. There is need for a new paradigm: the rich countries need to adapt a simpler lifestyle and poor countries need a more equitable development that defends both the poor, and fragile ecosystems.

The United Nations and the COP process is striving to do this but their aim to keep the world temperature rise to 1.5 degrees centigrade, looks to be in jeopardy,

reduced food production. Some countries that boast of a low carbon footprint, do not declare all the goods they demand from abroad - politely called 'outsourcing'! First nation people's lands have been damaged by mining and land-grabbing for industrialised agriculture, killing forests and species.

All people of goodwill should be part of the struggle to curtail capitalist consumerism and promote reparations to poor countries. The ideology of inexorable economic growth needs to be replaced by wise sustainable development. The Gross National Product needs to be replaced by 'buen vivir' - a happy living criteria. This would see people's needs and equality realised - not materialistic wants and gross inequality. There are three types of capital - nature, society, and finance. The first two need protection and fostering; the latter needs controls for the common good. This is Catholic social teaching and has been promoted so strongly and urgently by Pope Francis in Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti. His leadership is an inspiration for us to follow.



With the closure of our community in Parr St, we welcome Br Edward Egan as a new member to our community here in West Derby, who will be joining us shortly.

Eamonn O'Brien is recovering from a fall from a ladder recently. He fractured his shoulder in the fall and had to have a plate inserted in the upper arm. He can't wait to be back at work with his clients again.

We had some refurbishing done in the house recently, with showers, toilets and bathrooms being made more safe and user friendly. Christy has come down in the world; he now lives on the bottom floor.

Link with Asylum Link Merseyside: After a wonderful concert in Sefton Park at the weekend, celebrating music from Africa, and many other places, a busy week in ALM followed.

We enjoyed a great day in Wirral Country Park on Monday with a variety of activities in nature. A visit to the World Museum on Tuesday gave great insights into the scientifically and important national collection of over a million specimens from around the world. Then, on Wednesday, a BBQ was held for the many asylum seekers and their families in Overbury Street, followed by music, song, and dance - with a raffle that went on for ages, ensuring a gift for everybody present. It was wonderful to behold and see the many happy faces where they felt at home celebrating with their friends in this sanctuary. The song "All are welcome in this place" comes to mind.

Reflection: Whatever may be the tensions and the stresses of a particular day, there is always lurking close at hand the trailing beauty of forgotten joy or unremembered peace.

Howard Thurman

In my last contribution to the spring Online Presence newsletter about SERV, I talked about the importance and the privilege we have at SERV of seeing refugees and asylum seekers as individuals, not as a collective. With this in mind, let's hear just such a story...

A couple of weeks ago, I was chatting with a Mum who had escaped Sudan and arrived as asylum seeker in Salford in 2017 with her family, including her daughter.

At the time her daughter was 12 and could not speak English. By the time she was 16 in 2021, she achieved six grade 9s and one grade 8 at GCSE. With great pride her Mum was telling me that she was just finishing off her A Levels (having got straight A* in her mocks) and has a place to study Medicine in the University of East Anglia.

Her daughter also has a cousin, who was again an asylum seeker and then a refugee, who has been offered a place to study Medicine too - at Cambridge. Her mother was saying that her inspiration was her grandfather, who was a Doctor in Sudan. He has sadly died, but I am sure he would have been bursting with pride to see two of his grandchildren following his path.

I know from my own experience as a, now retired, Doctor that she will make a great one. She has already demonstrated her determination and resilience which will sustain her during a challenging but ultimately rewarding career. She will also have the inbuilt empathy, born of personal experience, to understand the feeling of worry and powerlessness in the face of illness which many patients have to deal with as they face an uncertain future.

She is a perfect example of that powerful combination when aspiration and opportunity that a good education provides meet. It's a lesson in how we all benefit from a society which is welcoming and supportive - the community of Salford has accepted her and her family, her teachers have recognised her abilities, nurtured her and educated her and, in the long run, many future patients will benefit from her care.

It's a story that I am sure Edmund Rice would have very much appreciated.

Richard Simpson, Volunteer at SERV



A recent visit to SERV and the Brothers at St Sebastian's from Br Paul Conn from Australia

‘Woodeaves’ Consecrated Religious Brotherhood



Some reflections - by Br George Gordon

Christian Brothers are identified in the church as lay religious. Many of us are often confronted with a simple but haunting question: what is a Brother? Some struggle with formulating a satisfactory response. Being a Brother and doing what Brothers do is at heart a matter of relationship. It seems to me that the calling or vocation to Brotherhood is too often misunderstood or poorly identified in the Church today.

Clerical State as normative:

The church administration emphasizes the clerical/priestly state, as normative for ministry and governance within the church, while brotherhood tends to become less visible or at least peripheral. In some cultures, the term brother is used to designate seminarians and other candidates for presbyter ordination. From this perspective brotherhood tends to be interpreted as a transitional stage

Consecrated Life:

In the first centuries of Christianity, consecrated life was composed predominantly of lay members, an expression of the yearning of men and women to live the Gospel with the radicalism proposed to all followers of Jesus. Even today lay members of the consecrated life - (men and women) – form the majority. “Brother” is the name traditionally given to the male lay Consecrated Religious in the Church since the beginning of consecrated life. The title does not belong to him exclusively, of course, but it represents a significant way of being in the ecclesial community in which he is the prophetic memory of Jesus-Brother, who told his followers: “And you are all brothers” (Mt 23:8) This saying of Jesus is passed on to us by the evangelist Matthew in a context in which Jesus speaks out against the hypocrisy of those who used religion to gain privileges and glory in the eyes

of others. The title of brother/sister underlines the common dignity and fundamental equality of all believers. Brothers are sons of the same heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:45), called upon to form a universal brotherhood in Christ, the firstborn of many brothers (Rom 8:29). However, we recognise that the vocation of the Religious Brother and Sister is not always well understood and appreciated within the Church.

Relational Character:

Immediately striking about the term brother is its relational character. One can't spell Brother without including other. Brother expresses both a specific relationship and a way of being in relationship. For us, Brothers, it assumes that we are willing to enter into relationships with others. It assumes we choose to be involved. The name by which we Brothers identify ourselves in life and in the church reflects a rich prophetic spirituality.

Brother is not only a title:

Brother is what we are. Even more . . . it is what we are called and committed to be, among ourselves and among the people of God.

Call to Consecrated Brotherhood:

In response to this mysterious call, of which we stand in awe, we have assumed the title “Brother.” We come together in community as brothers to live out this call. Our way of life leads to spiritual freedom and simplicity and humble service to the poor and marginalised.

Relationship with God:

Whatever else Religious Brothers do, whatever our ministry - the relationship that defines and shapes our Religious life is our relationship with God. We are called in faith by a loving God to a deep relationship with Jesus and with our Brothers in a religious community founded

by Blessed Edmund Rice. Jesus says to his disciples: “You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I call you friends because I have made known to you everything I have learned from my Father”. Brothers with one another: Everything we who are Brothers say about ourselves will not be authentic unless our common and community life is marked by love, mutual care, concern, courtesy, and hospitality. Jesus tells us that we will be recognised as his followers if we love one another. To be brothers with one another in religious community is much more than merely getting along with each other.

Our very title excludes distinctions among us:

Nationality, culture, ethnic heritage, education and ministry, all these are gifts that unite us - not differences making divisions among us. There are many unnecessary distinctions in our church today. Our presence and activity in the

church strives to communicate a perspective free of the distinctions that can easily deteriorate into division.

To be Brothers for the church is to live and proclaim in St. Paul's terms, “there is no longer Jew or Greek, no longer slave or free . . . for all of you are one in Christ.”

Brothers are lay religious in the church and society:

We Religious Brothers are often invisible. The question of visibility is more complex than the reality of ageing and fewer entering our Congregation today. It seems to me that in the past forty or so years, our church has become increasingly clerical.

In our times, when there are fewer and fewer priests, lay religious life is not always promoted, it seems to me, with any enthusiasm in the church.

Remembering Brother Tom Kelly cfc

This April we said goodbye to Brother Tom Kelly. Here we share a section of the eulogy that Chris Cleugh gave at his funeral held at St Peter and Paul's, Crosby

Our Brother Tom Kelly

It is fitting that I begin by thanking our Brother's family for the gift of Tom to the Congregation which began his journey of vocation of 75 years' service to the Risen Lord inspired by the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. He took the name Carthage; the first Bishop of Lismore and it seems prophetic that we are celebrating his Requiem between the memorials of Blessed Edmund on 5th May and St Carthage on 15th May.

Tom became Headmaster of the Mount in 1971 - he was a dedicated hard-working Headmaster who influenced generations of children.

Always in school at 8am and invariably the last to leave, his teaching methods were traditional - instilling the three Rs - Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. He encouraged active involvement in Music and Sport. One of his many initiatives was an expectation that the children should run round the block daily. Above all he nurtured the children in their Faith journey.

It was BK who spearheaded the move at St Mary's to co-education.

In 1981 Tom was made superior of the Community then of course resident in Claremont House. He was a greatly popular and gentle leader. He began to encourage more involvement with the laity. This included inviting others my family included to join the Community to Lauds and 7.30am Mass in the Brother's Chapel. A highlight of the year was Christmas Vigil Mass and hooley! What great celebrations these were - wonderful, generous hospitality! He always though looked out for those in need and sought to support and counsel them - every Christmas morning he visited a family in need and ensured that they were not without.

This really was the true Brother Kelly - a caring and generous heart to the elderly and those in need - he as the Founder - 'opened his heart to those suffering poverty and injustice'. He continually put his trust in the Lords' mercy and sought the intercession of Our Lady. Tom retired from the Mount in 1995 when asked by a colleague CB Prep Head what was his plans for retirement - he thought for a few moments and said, "I'm looking for a residential course that has no written component, no essay writing and no exams but will teach wisdom". He found it in Berkeley California.



On his return to the UK, he returned to Crosby and was very active in the local area - the Brothers had moved from Claremont House to Park Avenue, and he was able to continue to seek funding for the Development Fund and then to assist in the transfer of the Trusteeship from the Christian Brothers. He continued to be active in the local area and beyond. This included joining the College Pilgrimage to Lourdes during Easter week, promoting the Edmund Rice family, and raising monies for the CB African Missions.

When asked by the Province Leader Brother George Gordon to move to the St Anselm's and lead the ageing Community as they prepared to close the Brothers' House there - he immediately agreed. Tom became very popular there too - and developed strong links with St Anselm's College.

Tom was always happy working on his allotment and was very proud of his vegetables. He would arrive in school with bags of carrots for colleagues to take home with them. When the Brothers moved out of Birkenhead, Tom wanted to stay on Merseyside so moved into Ince Blundell Nursing Home, run by the Augustinian Nuns, who held him in the highest esteem and he them. Of course, he was not one to be tied down and managed to secure his own front door key that allowed him out beyond the usual 9pm curfew!

He moved ultimately to Springfield Nursing Home still with strong links with St Mary's - this run by former Head of Art Colin Wilkinson and his wife Wendy.

He will now surely be resting in the peace of the Risen Lord after a life well lived. In the words of the Prophet Job, which comforted Blessed Edmund on the tragic death of his beloved wife Mary, "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away - blessed be the name of the Lord!"

We will miss you! Rest in peace Brother!

A Call to Participation



INDUCTION

for

NEW STAFF & GOVERNORS

AT THE EDMUND RICE OFFICE,
WOODEAVES

26 SEPTEMBER 2023 9AM-3PM

- *Understand the Edmund Rice Heritage, Mission & Network*
- *It's about Support, Inspiration & Opportunity*
- *Meet other ER Staff, Brothers & Alumni*



Contact Ann Nichols for details and to register
annnichols.ero@gmail.com

A life in mission

**Brother Senan da Souza,
Congregational Leadership Team**



1. Can you share an anecdote from your life as a Christian Brother which shows you “in action”?

This question is better suited for an Indiana Jones interview than me! I think the time I was most ‘in action’ as a Christian Brother would be when I went with three other brothers to begin our presence in The Gambia, West Africa. We were the first Brothers there and had to live and work in a new country and culture, unfamiliar languages, and traditions, etc but it was an exciting time when we had to think and decide about everything as there were no path to follow but to make our own. Despite the mistakes and faux pas, it was a happy and fulfilling time as we relied on each other and the people who were welcoming, friendly, and accepting of us.

2. Tell us about your parents: what did they do, how did they influence you and what lessons did you learn from them?

My parents have a big influence on me. My mum was Irish and a nurse by profession and dad was Indian and an air and marine engineer in the Indian Navy.

They met in England as university students and lived most of their lives in India. I am reminded of the poem ‘Roots and Wings’ when I think of them. They both were rooted in their families, cultures, faith, etc. but had the freedom and independence to live in different countries and circumstances without losing their groundedness. I think they could do that because of their sense of connectedness and belonging, which they passed on to me and my sister. This gave us the confidence and the freedom to ‘grow wings’ because we knew we had deep roots in their love and care.

3. How did you know when you wanted to become a Christian Brother?

I went to a high school run by the Brothers. It was a boarding school in a mountain range, surrounded by forests and lakes - an idyllic, wild spot. (stmarys.edu.in) It was there that the idea of joining the Brothers started as I experienced the dedication and commitment of the Brothers who taught and cared for us, and became lifelong friends for me and for my classmates until this day.



4. Can you describe your biggest obstacles in life and how have you mastered them?

One obstacle I encountered was being bi-racial. In my family it was not a problem but in society and school it could be a hinderance not being fully Indian or fully Irish. Growing up it left me with a feeling of being a misfit, not totally belonging or an outsider when it suited people. But now that I have lived most of my life in cultures other than my own, (thirty-plus years in African countries, and now in Italy) I find that I have an advantage, giving me more flexibility, awareness and experiential understanding. It is easier to adapt and live with differences.

I identify more with human traits and values, rather than cultural traditions and customs. I see that for many today, being multi-racial is not rare.

5. What do you consider to be your greatest weakness?

I find that I can get disappointed easily and even depressed. Perhaps my faith in a loving God, or in the goodness of people is not strong enough. This can cause me to disengage, not to invest energy but withdraw till I regain perspective and ‘come to my senses.’

6. How did you develop your life philosophy?

From my family I inherited a strong Catholic faith but over the years that has been questioned and changed. I remember my childhood parish church had a large eye, perched high over the altar, looking down on the whole gathering. I still believe in a Divine power, but more as a Mystery than an old man who judges and watches every move we make. Perhaps Max Ehrmann’s ‘Desiderata’ would be a good answer to your question as I resonate with much that it says.

7. What is your vision for the future of Edmund’s mission?

One thing for the future is clear - we will not have Christian Brothers like we did in the past. There will be reduced numbers of Brothers mainly from Africa and Asia. But that does not mean the Edmund Rice spirit will be lost. It has already been taken up by non-Christian Brothers who have given it energy and expression in schools, university, projects, prayer - groups, etc around the world like never before. Edmund is inspiring and people are finding meaning for their lives in his mission.

8. What inspires you?

Presently, living here in Rome, I am inspired by Pope Francis and the way he keeps reaching out to all people in need. And keeps the environment question on the agenda.

9. What has been your favourite role within the congregation?

I have had several roles and each role has been wonderful, challenging, and fulfilling. But I would say my early years in Africa, when everything was new and exciting (and I was young and consequently more foolish!) would be special.

10. What would you say to someone considering joining the congregation?

If you feel called to make a difference in peoples’ lives this way, give it a try. If you feel you can be present, have compassion and help liberate people, then consider your options. The Christian Brothers are not what they were before in numbers or schools. Perhaps we are dying out, but the need for the charism of Edmund Rice is still relevant in the world where it is finding new expressions today. It has been a wonderful life, full of possibilities, belonging to this global group, sometimes working at the coalface, sometimes working to make it possible for others to be at the coal-face.

Like any life, it has its challenges and its consolations but to belong to the 200+ years old Edmund Rice tradition, imperfect, and human as it is, and become the place where human limitation is open to Divine possibilities, is wonderful, risky, mysterious, and life-giving

We thank Brother Senan for kindly sharing his reflections on ‘a life in mission’ with us.

Over the past few months, the number of people visiting the centre has begun to pick up; not quite pre-pandemic, but enough to make the centre feel a little cramped and you can get the occasional elbow in the ribs, navigating the kitchen at lunchtime.

The top five nationalities using ALM are Iranians, Iraqis, Sudanese, Afghanis and Syrians out of a total of eighty-six (which represents nearly half the countries on the planet!) That's a lot of different cultures in one place and I'm always pleasantly surprised by the way we all get on together.

Some people are super-polite and always wait for you to go through a door before them, which can lead to a minor Mexican Stand-off: after you, No after you.

Yesterday I found myself insisting that people waiting in the lunch queue were served before me, until it was pointed out that they were waiting for the Halal food and the plate being offered to me was of a different nature.

Food is one of those things that has the ability to unite or divide us; too spicy, not spicy enough. We're lucky to have cooks from around the globe cooking in our kitchen. Whatever is on the menu, there's always something to talk about.

I fell into the 'green bean' dhal trap some time ago. Ruth, from Pakistan, makes a fantastic dhal; lentils flavoured with onions, garlic, turmeric and a few other spices (depending on the region) and if you're lucky, a hot oil spiced 'Tarka' poured sizzling into the mix just before serving. The aroma is intoxicating.

One day I was surprised to find a green bean in my dhal, just the one, and I thought 'oh well, lucky me' as I popped it into my mouth and crunched down. A few seconds later, I thought my tongue had exploded as I discovered, of course, that it wasn't a bean but a green chilli.



Some countries have different versions of familiar foods. Porridge is one of those. A man who had been given Refugee Status, wanted to celebrate by serving breakfast for everyone and he prepared a huge pan of fermented meat porridge. Lots of people around the world are brought up on this and an eager queue had formed. As a final flourish, and to a general murmur of approval, he poured in a bottle of vegetable oil and began to serve. I was too scared to have a go, as the thought of the meat and oil took my tastebuds to a place they didn't really want to go. On reflection, I wish I'd tried. If you were living somewhere harsh, maybe in the mountains in winter, and had a hard day ahead in the fields, it's just the thing to keep you on the go all day.

We're lucky to have Kasem 'Mr Boy' here at the moment. He obtained funding to teach Iranian Cuisine to people and is here every Monday afternoon, producing different speciality dishes, like Polo Bah Tahdig (bread crust rice) or Salad-e Shirazi (Cucumber salad with pomegranate.)

Refugee Week is coming, 19th to the 25th of June and we're all set for our Trip to Wirral, The Big BBQ and several concerts and performances including one for the Mayor of Mold! To be honest it's nice to concentrate on the positives - the food, the choir, all the outdoor projects, because otherwise, the prospects for people seeking asylum are not great.

The latest Immigration Bill, now in the Lords, is designed to stop people claiming Asylum in the UK. It will be done by treating people's Asylum claims differently, depending on how they arrive in the UK. It is not fair, that two people who have similar claims, will be given different treatment and outcomes based on their method of arrival in the UK. One will be detained and removed, the other given the right to claim refugee status.

The Government has acknowledged that they will have to make changes to Human Rights Legislation in order to implement their plans. As yet they are unable to say what these will be. It should be borne in mind that Human Rights are Universal, they apply equally to all of us, and so changes designed to let a government get its way in one area, may have implications for us all.

Despite all the things going on in the background, as I said at the outset, the centre is busier and buzzing. Sister Anne, who works on our Action Asylum programme, coined a phrase to attach to some of our work - MIBB - Make it a Bit Better. And so that's what we'll do each day and try and keep on making life for our Asylum Seekers, just that little bit better. **Cheers, Ewan**

Dr Julia Ravey, former student of St Edward's College. Presenter and Producer at the BBC.

My school days are something I have so much joy looking back on. I started at St Edwards College, Liverpool in September 2004, following in the footsteps of my dad and many of his family members.

From the moment I set foot in the school at the Open Day the previous year, I was desperate to go there. The warm staff, amazing facilities, and creative ways all the different subjects were showcased made me fall in love with the school, and the morning I received the letter telling me I had secured a music place, I cried with happiness.

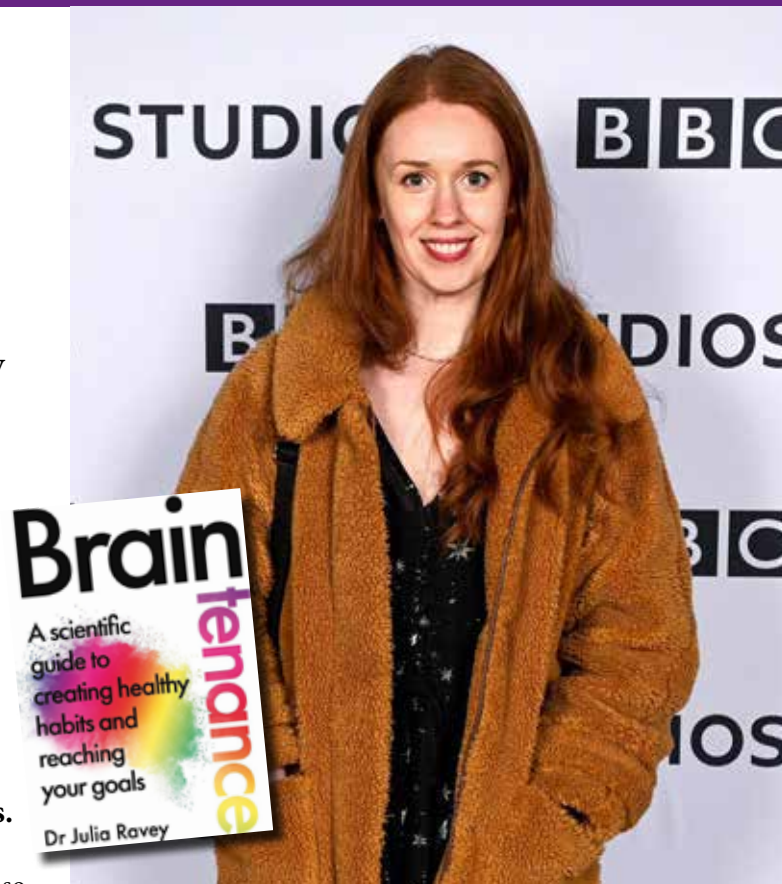
Throughout my time at St Edwards, the teachers were always so encouraging and helped me to nurture my love of performing and science - two things that some might see as contradictory.

I performed in every play I could, taking drama for GCSE and A-level, and teaching younger students during the drama festival when I was in Sixth Form. I also was challenged in the classroom.

I had my eyes opened to the complexities of life through studying biology, chemistry and maths, which led to me studying neuroscience at UCL and graduating with my PhD in 2021.

The first time I combined my passion for the arts and sciences was in St Edwards' College Hall, creating a devised piece of theatre about how the brain changes during Alzheimer's disease during my drama A-level. I look back now and can see this as my earliest attempt at science communication – the practice of creatively explaining complex discoveries.

I now do this every day in my role at the BBC, producing science programmes for Radio 4 and presenting a BBC Sounds podcast all about science in sport.



My teachers encouraging me to try this unusual mixture showed me how they trusted in my creativity and ability to understand complex science, a trust which has given me confidence to continually push myself beyond the 'typical' ways science is presented.

The most precious things to have come out of my time at St Edwards are my friendships. I have a group of ten friends who I speak to nearly every day, and this group was formed at school. We are there for each other during celebrations, hard times, and just the mundane day-to-day. Even when I went to university, my new friends would say the laughter coming from my room just from reading messages from the 'Eddies' girls was like nothing else. Having a solid support group has given me boosts when I have needed them, and I am so grateful for them.

Make the most of the small moments you have at school, because they become some of the biggest stories.

Book
www.panmacmillan.com/authors/dr-julia-ravey/braintenance/9781529080056



Louis Simpson, former student of St Aidan's Catholic Academy, now teacher at The Trinity Catholic School, Nottingham.

I had an ... interesting start to my time in education. I spent most of my time outside the classroom, being removed by teachers, or simply taking no interest in my studies.

When Edmund Rice became involved with my school, I didn't think it would make a difference to me; little did I know, I was the ideal candidate! I was a child who cared but didn't want to show it.

After running a few Edmund Rice summer camps, I became very dedicated to both my education and the Edmund Rice network. A life-changing immersion trip to India in 2012 enabled me to realise that teaching was my passion.

I am now a fully qualified teacher of English at The Trinity Catholic School, Nottingham. I love my job and don't plan to stop any time soon! Inspired by the Edmund Rice immersion I participated in through St Aidan's, I have recently managed to gain approval for my first Immersion Project to India in 2024, and we have already begun our fundraising.

I have been so glad to receive the support of the Edmund Rice office and St Joseph's College in getting my own immersion off the ground. It's hard enough to believe I'm teaching, harder still to believe I'm taking staff and Sixth Formers to another continent in the near future. I can't wait to see some of the friends I made in New Delhi.

I am hoping to build a foundation for the Immersion Project that transcends me moving to another school, which I don't think will be difficult - once staff have shared this incredible experience.

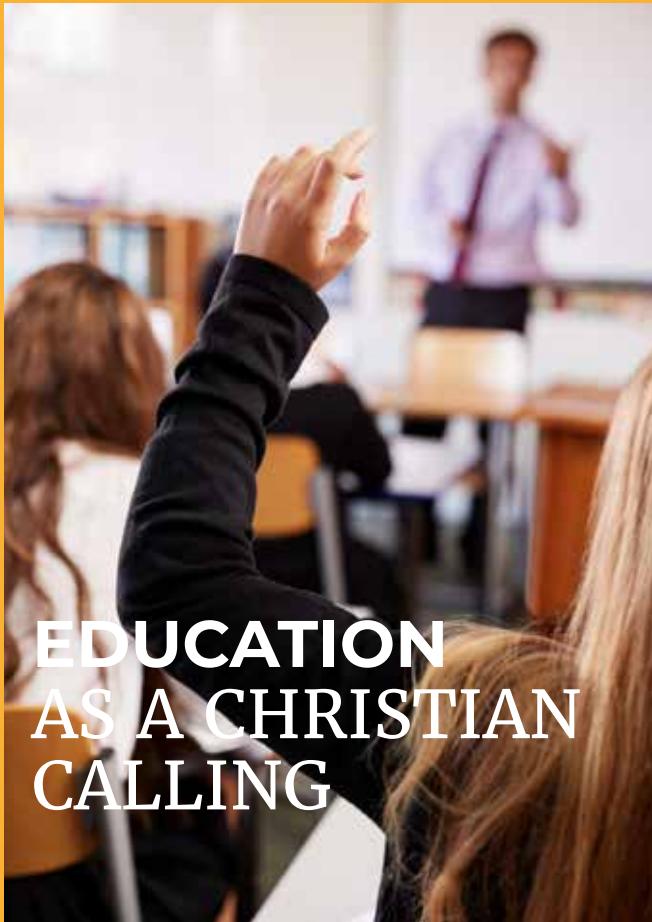
We would love to hear from other alumni and feature you in our magazine,

Get in touch and let us know what you are doing now.

Valuing and enabling the role and vocation of Christian teachers and support staff as acalling from God and a sharing in the Church’s mission

AN EDMUND RICE SCHOOL

- Recognises and values the contribution of all staff and governors to its mission
- Teaches by witness and example
- Provides opportunities to nurture & develop personal spirituality



Teachers in our network share with us how their vocation to education is a Christian calling

I came to teaching late in life and when I decided it was what I wanted to do, I did not originally have any specific thoughts to only teach in a Catholic school (as then, I did not understand the importance of faith in schools, especially primary schools).

I am a strong practising Catholic who is involved in my local parish as a Eucharistic Minister and help to lead the local children’s liturgy group. I felt called to teach and got a job at Runnymede St Edward’s which is a part of the Edmund Rice community. It is only since I have been in a Catholic school that

I have realised the importance of the message that we try to get across and the examples we set every day to the pupils that we come into contact with. Only a small percentage of the children that we teach everyday are strong in their faith and most do not go to church and have very little understanding of the importance of what their faith can do for them (this is due to the example that is set at home rather than the children themselves). This makes the example that we provide, as teachers in their school, and the supportive and inclusive environment that we create even more important to help and support them in their everyday lives.

Sometimes the example that we set is the only positive example they see, so it is vital that we help to give them the grounding that will hopefully set them up for the rest of their lives. The CEO of Tesco, Terry Leahy, who is an old Edwardian, says that a lot of the decisions he still makes in life and in business are based around the beliefs that were cemented in his education in St Edward’s College. To me this shows that if pupils receive the right start in life, then it can stay with them and help them to make the right decisions and do the right things as they go through life.



Joe Quilty
Primary Teacher
Runnymede St Edward’s Catholic Primary School



I came to St Aidan’s thirteen years ago because I was passionate about support work and thought my skills were best used when working with students and their families in a pastoral role.

Over time, I was called to work in chaplaincy. I felt the Holy Spirit was with me during this transition of roles, but despite my fears, I decided to put my trust in God and fulfil my calling.

I have since completely dedicated myself to chaplaincy work, I believe serving others was my purpose in life that God had for me long before I was born. My heart rejoices when I read scripture, Pope’s encyclicals, and various religious readings. This joy is doubled when I share those with others.

My life has meaning when I help the poor and needy members of our community and the creation.

Life with God is very good.

Kasia Szczepanska
School Chaplain
St Aidan’s Catholic Academy

A Word from the Governor!

Nick Atkins

**Governor at St Joseph's College
Stoke on Trent**

I am delighted to be invited to write some words regarding my role as governor at St Joseph's. As a former student, I have some very fond memories of my time at the school, and particularly my latter years when Brother Sassi was the Headteacher.

Locally, the school has long been held as the best non-fee-paying school in Stoke on Trent and my wife and I were relieved and delighted when our daughter secured a place in 2009. In early 2011 nomination forms circulated for a new parent governor, and I put myself forward, but wasn't immediately successful. A few weeks later, I had a call from the Chair of Governors, Andy Franks, inviting me to a meeting with him and Headteacher, Roisin Maguire. Andy explained that the governing body had begun looking at the skill set of existing governors - with a multi-site occupation, leasehold premises, ageing buildings, and exciting development plans, my professional role as a chartered surveyor was seen as a useful addition and I was asked to consider becoming a co-opted governor. I was thrilled at the opportunity; not only to help drive further continued growth and improvement, but also the ability to give back some time and support to the school and be part of what is probably the largest volunteer group across the country.

I remember not particularly enjoying the first few meetings - there was a huge amount of background information to get up to speed on and I really felt out of my depth with some of the discussions - they say there is no such thing as a stupid question, but I'm sure I must have asked a good number! I really don't think anything can prepare you for just how detailed and consuming the role can become. Soon, I was allocated into the Estates committee and started getting to grips with the complex issues of running a multi-site school, made even more complex with some, but not all, of the buildings being managed under a PFI contract.

A restructure of the sub-committees saw Estates move into the Resources committee, which also includes finance and HR. In my professional career, I managed some large value projects and thought I had a good grasp of financial planning, but I am constantly in awe of the finance team at St Josephs led by Karen Cleverley. The amount of financial planning, budgeting, challenging of contract costs etc is unbelievable and what they achieve with the paltry educational funding that we receive is outstanding.



As well as Resources, I chair Admissions and sit on the Pupil Disciplinary committees.

In some ways, Admissions is easy - we have a policy setting out the admissions criteria and we follow it. But it is also very difficult - St Joseph's is always heavily oversubscribed with typically three hundred plus applicants for one hundred and fifty places. One cannot help feeling desperately sorry for the children and parents that we are not able to accept.

On pupil disciplinary, we have the challenging and important task of making sure our high standards of behaviour are maintained, even though so many students lost out as a result of not being able to come into school during the covid period. We help to ensure that the school is working hard with every student so that they progress and leave the school well rounded and ready to achieve their ambitions.

Alongside my roles on the committees, I have been vice-chair of the Board for the last three years and support our excellent Chair, Sarah Scott as we continue to strive for even better. We are so blessed that under the leadership of Melissa Roberts and the SLT we have a very closeknit team of teaching and support staff who are dedicated to the success of each and every student.

Some twelve years later from that first meeting, a second daughter also having gone through the school and just sat her A levels, I think I am now the longest serving member of the current Board and am proud of the work that I and my fellow governors do to support the school

Deputy HeadSpace

Jamie Long

Deputy Headteacher

Runnymede St Edward's Catholic Primary

'God has chosen me to do this work'

My educational journey started in Anfield, Liverpool - almost thirty years ago. I vividly recall my teacher sharing her attitude towards her occupation, passionately explaining that she had been chosen by God to do 'this work' - it was clearly more than a job. The desire and excitement she held was contagious.

Her ability to share even the most mundane concepts in a manner to enthuse was unparalleled. Fast-forward to January 4th, 2021, I excitedly joined Runnymede St Edward's Catholic Primary School and the Edmund Rice Family as Deputy Headteacher, after holding on to a metaphorical torch that she had passed to me unknowingly that day.

As a child, I grew up in a loving family with adults who wanted nothing but 'better' for their children. I was pushed and encouraged to, in whatever the venture, do nothing less than my best. My best offered me opportunities throughout my education, including studying in a much sought after local secondary grammar school. It was there that my passion for change became apparent, echoing the work of Blessed Edmund Rice.

My meandering paths, and my dedicated mother's vocation to nursing, led me to working in healthcare, helping to develop computer programmes to systematically improve information sharing across the spine of the country. Passion-driven to influence more, I spent years working within various healthcare fields whilst undertaking a degree in Computer Science.

As I entered my twenties, my career and progression planned out in my head, I received a call from a dear family friend. It was a request to help support in her local primary school - I obliged. If there was ever a calling, that was it. I'd grown up educationally supporting a younger brother and sister, worked in the technological healthcare field, decided upon a career in Computer Science and yet, here I was, staring at thirty four Key Stage 1 children, their eyes showing the utmost anticipation for every word that I had to offer. I was hooked.



I immediately enrolled in teacher training, fuelled with a similar desire akin to my primary teacher all those years ago. I recognised the feeling that she must have felt, the spark, the delight, the understanding of influencing change for others to succeed, to do more...to be who they want to be. It was my calling.

Teacher, Lecturer, Assistant Headteacher and now Deputy Headteacher; I couldn't be more exultant with how my career has afforded me opportunities to influence in the most powerful way.

All of my experiences, both personal and educational, have now helped me to get where I am today: instil values, thoughts, and beliefs - as they were shared with me by parents and grandparents alike.

Now part of something bigger, the Edmund Rice family, my scope for change has grown. The prayer of Blessed Edmund Rice reads, ...'Grant us the courage and compassion of Edmund as we seek to live lives of love and service.'

My service is through faith and education, sharing my philosophy of growth and development through love and dedication.



St Ambrose Preparatory School

This year, Advocacy Group have been working on introducing the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) to St. Ambrose Prep.

This award introduces children to the UN Convention on Children’s Rights and enables schools to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive.

On the first steps of our journey towards this award, Advocacy Group have researched children’s rights, and investigated why some children may have more barriers to equal access than others. We have written letters introducing the RRSA to parents and governors of our school and have prepared and delivered a whole-school assembly to launch the award to children.

We have also contributed lots of our own ideas to a list of next steps that we feel that our school should achieve in order to promote knowledge and understanding of children’s rights within our school. As well as this, we have also been actively working to improve our school community and environment by acting as play leaders on the playground to encourage positive relationships, and by litter picking on school grounds and the surrounding area, to keep our shared spaces clean and tidy.

St Joseph’s Preparatory School

How fast has this school year gone?

Here at St Joseph’s Preparatory school, we have had an action-packed time. This has not only involved the children and parents, but the introduction of a few new teachers. A warm welcome goes to Mr Gilchrist-Hawke our new Deputy Head and Prep 6 form teacher, Mrs Woollam, Prep 5 form teacher, Mrs Crew, Prep 4 form teacher, Mrs Dawes who is our PE and Games teacher, and Mrs Grady in our EYFS department. All of them have joined our school and have already contributed with these experiences and knowledge with great effect.

On to school business. St Joseph’s Preparatory School will be launching its own Forest School provision in the 2023 Autumn Term. Mrs Grady, a qualified Forest School leader said: “Forest School is a child-centred learning process, it develops confidence, resilience and self-esteem through learner-inspired, hands-on experiences. It creates an environment for learners to try new experiences whilst also taking risks and show that fire can be used for special ceremonies too as well as encouraging respect of beliefs and values of others. I am thrilled to be bringing the forest school ethos to St Joseph’s Preparatory.”

They have also come up with a Forest School Prayer,

This is our forest school our trees, bugs and bees.
May minibeasts thrive and woodland animals flourish.
Let God teach us to care, protect and love
all of these things and each other. Amen



Since our last article, children in Prep 6 have continued with their Edmund Rice Awards and have been wracking their brains to come up with who they were going to raise money for.

I am so happy to say that the children had some amazing ideas and we decided to have a whole school non-uniform day, with donations, and they also provided tea, coffee, and homemade cakes to parents. This event was very well attended by not only their parents, but from other parents throughout the school.

The children went above and beyond my expectations and I am happy to say that the final total raised was £308.85. This money will be going to the network and will help to bring Rutendo and Azile to England.



On a personal note, I want to say how happy and overwhelmed I have been to see the children in Prep 6 really take this project on and the result that they got. Well done, Edmund Rice has certainly been inspiring our children to continue in his footsteps.

The end of year is fast approaching, and I am sure that everyone will be busy getting ready for this. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a relaxing summer holiday.

For those of you that are moving on to pastures new: whether Year 6 children, or teachers, I wish you all the best and remember,

“Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

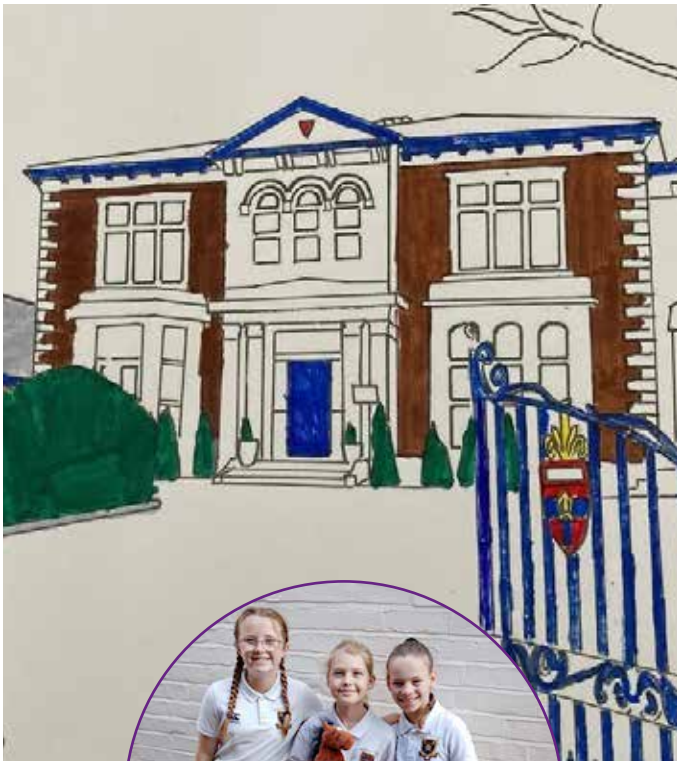
Vicky Kent
Teaching Assistant
St Joseph’s Preparatory School

We are so proud of a group of our Year 5 girls who had the initiative to raise money for two charities of their choice.

They held a raffle to raise money for NDCS, the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people. This means a lot to our children, because in school we learn BSL as a second language.

They also held a ‘Guess the name of the horse teddy’ competition to raise money for World Horse Welfare.

In total, they raised over £300 for these charities.



Our school garden was starting to become overgrown and looked rather unloved, so our School Council and CAFOD Club decided to bring it back to life with some help from Miss Walton and her parents.

Year 2 started ‘Operation Clear Up’ where we weeded, cleared, and prepared the garden and polytunnel, ready for the children to start planting and watering.

We now have fruit and vegetables growing and have even used some of our herbs in the school lunches. We have monitors assigned to certain jobs, for example, watering, and tidying. We have been awarded two levels so far in the RHS School Gardening Awards and will keep going until we achieve them all.

It's lovely to see the garden being used in science lessons too when learning all about plants. We're excited to see what we can grow next!



On Friday 26th May, our whole school gathered together in the glorious sunshine for a ‘Big Walk’ from the Prep to our games field to raise money for CAFOD.

Families were invited to walk with us and then have a picnic lunch together at the field.

We were delighted to see so many families and to share our afternoon together. The children had a wonderful afternoon playing games with their teachers and families which was a fitting way to start the half term break. Our school families showed such generosity as always.

Blue Peter Silver Badge

Luke in Year 3 has been awarded his Silver Blue Peter badge for his work with the environment at home, in the community, and in school for Litter Life.

Luke also went with Year 5 on a beach clean and made a collage using the litter they picked up.

He has a passion for the environment and his future plan is to be like David Attenborough and help animals and the environment.





This academic year has been a hugely successful year for Runnymede St Edward's Catholic Primary School in Liverpool.

As an Edmund Rice School, we are immensely proud of our bespoke curriculum that is based upon the 8 essentials of Edmund Rice Education and how our fidelity to living out these principles spreads beyond the classroom and permeates all that we do.

In March 2023 we had our first Ofsted inspection since opening in the midst of a global pandemic on 1st September 2020 as a maintained school, and we were delighted to have been described as 'Good' overall with two of the five areas, 'Behaviour' and 'Personal Development', being awarded as 'Outstanding'. The inspection team spoke very highly of our Magna Carta Award which promotes adherence to the 8 Essentials in all that we do and encourages our Young Edwardians to go out into the world to become active participants of Edmund Rice's legacy.

"Pupils respect other people. They discuss the differences between themselves and others in an incredibly positive and mature way. Pupils also collect food and raise money for multiple charities and worthy causes... Leaders encourage pupils to develop into active and responsible citizens"...

Ofsted 2023

Our Year 6 pupils have worked closely with Edmund Rice England to promote our advocacy work through organising various food bank collections, fundraising for numerous charities, promoting awareness of marginalised sectors of our community, and sharing information with the Edmund Rice global community through a Radio Maria broadcast.

Over the Summer Term, our pupils have been working tirelessly with Edmund Rice England in collaboration with Liverpool Football Club Foundation (as part of their 'I Will' programme- a programme that encourages all participants to be trail blazers of social action) towards achieving their Edmund Rice Charism Award. They have planned an array of fundraising activities to support Alder Hey Hospital such as raffles, sponsored walks, and assemblies to raise funds for such a wonderful cause and to show concern for others.

We have been delighted with the efforts and ongoing support from our Young Edwardians, staff, and Runnymede family as we strive to follow the footsteps of Edmund Rice.



STAFF

ADVOCACY

TRAINING



**For any staff involved in:
Edmund Rice International Groups
Peace & Justice
Advocacy**

help with...

- **running an advocacy group**
- **materials & campaigns**
- **contacts and support**

October 5 - Woodeaves

Book now!

follow up:

**Student & Staff visit to Geneva
- UN Human Rights Council Jan. 23**





Ignatius Park College bears witness to the dedication and hard work of the Christian Brothers, who, in the spirit of Edmund Rice, have lived and worked in the College community for 100 years. While Ignatius Park College opened on its current site at Cranbrook in Townsville in 1969, it continued the proud traditions of Our Lady’s Mount, the first of a number of schools opened by the Christian Brothers in the Townsville region.



Today, Ignatius Park College is a boys’ secondary school of approximately 950 students who are in 7 Pastoral Houses - Baillie, Reid, Rice, Putney, Carew, Treacy and Nolan

We are proudly dedicated to boys and their spiritual, academic, social, and physical growth. As Townsville’s only boys’ school, we are uniquely placed to cater for their specific needs.

The College’s challenging academic programs are carefully structured to allow maximum personal growth within an environment tailored specifically to cater for boys’ academic, physical, and emotional development.

We provide a balanced and holistic education within the Edmund Rice network, building on the Christian Brothers’ proud tradition of educating young men as leaders of the community, with a strong focus on faith education and Christian living.

We pride ourselves in promoting structure, processes and relationships which build connections through the integration of academic and co-curricular programs that recognise the learning demands of our students. Our Pastoral system nurtures and challenges our boys to become confident, happy and responsible young men with a highly developed sense of social justice.

We have a clearly articulated policy to deter bullying and harassment, striving to create an environment where each student can feel confident to achieve his potential.

Our prime focus is to promote the safety and wellbeing of students under our care.

At Ignatius Park College we take our responsibilities for child safeguarding extremely seriously and therefore we commit to ensuring that all our schools have appropriate policies and practices to make them places that are both safe and inclusive. Central to this, is student voice and agency. Our child safeguarding programs are regularly updated and checked for compliance with regulatory requirements.

We believe that Ignatius Park College students – the boys of today – have a vital role to play as outstanding young men of the future, with highly developed skills in leadership, critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence. Ignatius Park College offers a Liberating Education, based on Gospel Spirituality, within an Inclusive Community, committed to Justice and Solidarity.



Highlights of our Edmund Rice Feast Day celebrations in May

A QR code that, when scanned, likely leads to digital content about the school's Edmund Rice Feast Day celebrations.

Secondary Schools

St Aidan's Catholic Academy

Summer term is always very busy in school. It begins with Eastertide and goes into Pentecost, when we reflect upon our advocate, the Holy Spirit.

We are encouraged to act through the powerful flame images and reminded to be bold and courageous.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit we went on evangelising the modern world through liturgies and school prayers, which lead to deeper spiritual experiences for many of our pupils; four were Baptised, one had his First Holy Communion and five Confirmed their faith. We can confidently say that our Christian community is growing with joy.

Pupils begin GCSEs and A-Levels, we celebrate leavers' events and welcome new pupils to the school. We have opportunities to reflect upon our achievements and progress. Out of concern for the whole person, pupils are able to access many subjects, building upon their skills and giving them opportunities to discover their talents and use them throughout their Christian mission.





The allotment project fulfils our ambition of educating the pupils about justice and showing compassion for those in need.

Our allotment has brought joy to many this half term, it is thriving with two large polytunnels containing potatoes, peas, spring onions, broccoli, carrots, lettuce, pak choi, tomatoes, peppers, French beans, and rocket. There are also six raised beds outside with onions, garlic, and broad beans growing, and fifteen flowerbeds.

Anna Armstrong said: “The allotment was set up in March 2022 to work towards the St Aidan’s three sustainable development goals, which are action on climate change, good health, and wellbeing, and reducing hunger. Additionally, we want to work with the local community to create a safe, post-Covid space for all members of our community to enjoy. We want to build cross-generational relationships by working with local nurseries, primary schools, and care homes, and support those in need by distributing produce grown on-site. Special thanks must go to our lovely volunteer, Lynne Reay, who is the grandmother of one of our pupils, whose help has been invaluable.”

Now the allotment is thriving, Mrs. Armstrong - who is clearly in education due to responding to Christian calling - and the well-being team she leads, have started hosting community events. “The afternoon with St Mary Magdalen was brilliant,” she added. “Everyone had fun and, most importantly, everyone played their part in making a difference. “We have also had visits from a local nursery and the wellbeing group led all the activities. The children loved tricking the worms to come out from underground by doing the bird dance.”

Primary school pupils engaged in a range of gardening activities including a tour of the polytunnels where the youngsters learned about what was growing and had a turn at watering the vegetables; planting flowers; decorating raised beds with colourful chalk; following a worm trail searching for fun facts about worms hidden around the garden; and listened to a story, ‘Super Worm’ by Julia Donaldson.

Reception teacher, Joanne Robson, from St Mary Magdalen Catholic Primary School, said:

“We had such a lovely afternoon. Congratulations to Anna and the boys for a successful event. They were an absolute credit to you.”

The allotment has also received visitors from Belle Vue Care Home. Four residents of the care home and two members of staff joined the pupils, as part of the school’s goal to promote cross-generational relationships.

We feel truly blessed, looking back at the most amazing year we have had. Every single member of our community lives life to the full guided the Gospel and inspired by the life and actions of Blessed Edmund Rice.



St Aidan’s School Chaplain Kasia Szczepanska attended staff training on advocacy, human rights and the work of Edmund Rice international in Geneva this June along with other staff from across the English’s schools’ network.

She felt ‘inspired and motivated to ensure that a rights-based approach to social justice is observed in their school and looks forward to sharing her learning with the whole school in the new term.’

Year 13 Awards Night
This Term we were delighted to welcome back our Year 13 leavers of 2022 for their Awards Presentation Evening.

Before the Presentations began, our 1st XV and the Old Boys met for a final game on the rugby pitch. It was initially a tight game with the score at half time 11-6 to 1st Team. The Old Boys came out in the second half with all guns blazing and took a lead of 23-16. As the game progressed, fitness levels shone through for the current XV with the final score being 51-23. Hanan K was a worthy winner of the Sean Ferguson Player of the Match Award. Afterwards the Old Boys, their parents/carers, guests, and staff gathered in the Central Atrium to celebrate the exceptional achievements in the 2021/22 academic year.

We would like to thank everyone for attending and for making the evening so special. Thank you to the choir, musicians, and music staff for entertaining us throughout the evening, our guest speaker Mr Chris Jones (former England Rugby Union International) for his words of wisdom, Mrs Taylor for hosting the event and to all the staff behind the scenes who helped the event run so smoothly. Thank you to our special guest Mr Carl Aspinwall who was awarded the Edmund Rice Service Award in recognition of his services to teaching which spans five decades here at St Ambrose!

We are incredibly proud of our Old Boys. We wish them well in their future endeavours and look forward to keeping in touch over the coming years.



2023 Ski Trip

Our ski trips to Zell Am See, Austria, are experiences that will stay with pupils forever. From skiing on the glacier to enjoying fancy dress day and using the extra facilities of football, basketball, and trampolining, the trip provides an array of thrilling activities that are enjoyed by all.

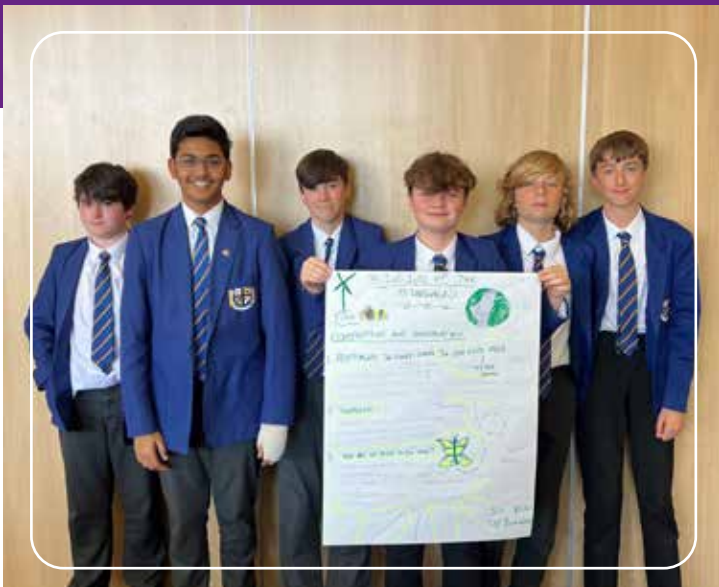
This April's ski trip was a perfect opportunity for pupils to try something new, and even beginners got a chance to ski on the glacier and tried the black slope, the black mamba! This is one of the most renowned black slopes in the Alps, with a gradient of 63%. Not something to be taken lightly! You feel the burn as you rocket down this kilometre-long run with a vertical drop of 290 metres. It was a challenging experience, but the pupils showed remarkable progress and determination.

One of the highlights of the trip was fancy dress day. The pupils were excited to dress up and show off their costumes. There was an array of creative costumes on display, ranging from superheroes to famous movie characters. The pupils had a fantastic time, and it was an excellent opportunity for them to socialize with each other and make new friends.

Aside from skiing, the pupils also enjoyed using the extra facilities provided by the hotel. The football and basketball courts were a big hit, and the pupils spent many hours playing and having fun. The trampolining was also a popular activity, and the pupils showed off their acrobatic skills with great enthusiasm.

The trip was an excellent opportunity for the pupils to experience a different culture and language and helped to develop their confidence and independence. It was an unforgettable experience that will stay with them for a lifetime.





Earth Day

To celebrate Earth Day on 22 April this year, St Anselm's College invited the Edmund Rice Office to lead a workshop on caring for our planet and Earth Rights.

As part of the workshop, lower school students were joined by some Sixth Form climate activists to make a positive difference to our immediate environment by sowing wildflower seeds around Outwood House to ensure we encourage more insect life and help the biodiversity of the grounds.



The Wirral Secondary School Cool Climate Challenge was held on Friday 19th May 2023.

This is part of the sustainability governance branch of Wirral Council and also part of our Green Flag accreditation status which we will apply for in July 2023.

This was a sustainability competition held at the Floral Pavilion in New Brighton, Wirral - for all secondary schools (aged 11-18) in the Wirral area. This was St Anselm's first year entering a team and we were up against some stiff competition from 13 other schools, some of whom entered older students.

Our Year 9 boys (aged 13-14) were given 30 minutes to prepare a sustainable project for their local area that would attract wildlife. This was an unseen challenge, and the students had no idea of the challenge or did any preparatory work. All the boys contributed well and presented their ideas to a room full of people.

The title of their project was 'Blinging up Birkenhead' which included the idea of each school in our local area having a composting and growing area on each school site for recycling food waste and encouraging new wildlife.

The mayor of Wirral Council, Jerry Williams, was very impressed with the St Anselm's project and how articulate they were. Unfortunately, we didn't win - a sixth form team from another school, who were far more advanced in their language and presentation skills were the winners, but our boys truly were superb and did the College and the Edmund Rice Network proud.



In September the College celebrates the 90th Anniversary of our foundation and opening by the Christian Brothers in September 1933.

In order to mark and celebrate this landmark the Edmund Rice Trust will be holding a Gala Dinner on 1st July 2023 in our College Hall. Our Guest Speaker is one of our famous alumni, Mark Palios, former professional footballer, and Chief Executive of the Football Association, and current owner of Tranmere Rovers.

We anticipate a wonderful evening of Anselmian memories and reminiscences when we will also provide an update on the progress of the Outwood Top Floor project.

Charity Run

Congratulations to all of our runners who took part in a Metric Marathon organised by Dr Cooper. Eleven students took part in the gruelling challenge, with even the two youngest participants - from Year 8 and 9 - completing the full 16.5 mile course.

To get the distance completed within the afternoon, strict fractions of 7:30 mile pace were set. The team are delighted to get the job done and help the College raise money for the DEC's response to the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

Thanks to all of our supporters and those who cheered us on, especially our wonderful team in Reception whose organisation and support were crucial to our success.



St Edward's student leaders presenting at the Edmund Rice Schools' Student Leadership Conference.

The Bags to school campaign was a whole school effort which resulted in £168.75 being raised for the Ukraine Appeal.

It was most wonderful to see our students contributing not only towards the local community but looking beyond that and considering international affairs within the cause of social justice and human rights. However, this was not possible without the nourishment and encouragement of Solemn Benediction in the Brother's Chapel within our school. This Solemn Blessing was encountered by many pupils.

We were graced with the presence of the Vicar for Religious Life in the Archdiocese of Liverpool, representatives from the Christian Brothers, the Cathedral Clergy, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the FCJ Sisters, and our very own Chaplain.

We were most enriched by our chorister's accompaniment of such adoration and praise for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. All of which encountered Edmund's Spirituality. A love for the Blessed Sacrament amongst the local community.

St Joseph's College - Welcomes Refugees

St Joseph's College has truly embraced the network's advocacy campaign this year - Welcoming Postcards 'Students Rebuild Art for Refugees' project.

Hundreds of students at the College have participated, creating wonderful messages and images to welcome those who need our help, arriving on our shores seeking support and sanctuary.

The project at St Joseph's has been wonderfully led by Miss Laura Hall. The postcards have been digitally uploaded to the Students Rebuild website, for each one \$5 is donated to refugee camps internationally looking after child refugees. Schools from across the Edmund Rice International community participated and we raised over \$9,000. Miss Hall has displayed the postcards artistically throughout the college and students handed over some of their messages face-to-face when Br Ger brought along some asylum seekers that he works with in Salford. **A fantastic job!**



Pilgrimage to Lourdes
May 2023

Twenty-three students and four staff answered the call of Our Lady and joined the Archdiocese of Birmingham in pilgrimage.

Filled with an array of emotion, we left school on 27th May at 4.15am to travel to the airport to meet other pilgrims and escort the sick to Lourdes. The atmosphere at the airport at the beginning of half term was chaotic, not only for us, but the apprehension was soberly brought home to us on meeting Maureen. At 92, she had hardly left home for five years and sat crying and shaking in her wheelchair. The students immediately comforted and chatted to her, promising that all would be well. And it certainly was!

The staff and students this year had the immense privilege of spending a week in the presence of Our Lady, working tirelessly in the Accueil, attending services, and immersing themselves in the life and history of St. Bernadette. We escorted sick pilgrims to Mass, took them shopping, learned knitting and card games, joined them in lighting candles, played cards, sang, and prayed with them.

We visited the Baths and took part in the water service, visited Gavarnie in The Pyrenees to glory in the awe and wonder of a snow-capped mountain village, walked the High Stations, and prayed the Rosary as we processed happily in torchlight to the sounds of Ave Maria, holding our banner high. We lit a candle on behalf of our college community, and remembered our friends and family. We witnessed the anointing of the sick, learned to communicate with people with disability, made new friends, spoke at the closing Mass, lead evening prayer and laughed and cried in equal measure.

On our return, I asked the students to reflect, and I include a little of what they said:

“Lourdes was one of the best life experiences that I have ever had. I was feeling pretty nervous going into it as I didn't really know what to expect, or what kind of people we would be working with. I can honestly say that coming home was one of the hardest things that I had to do. I met some of the best people during my time in Lourdes, every single person had an impact on me and the life that I now live, especially Marjorie and Maureen, at the ages of 90 and 92 they had lived a long and prosperous life that I aspire to live. They were both nurses and spoke highly of their jobs, they taught me that mindset is everything and that anything can be achieved if you put your mind and soul into it. They both had the best humour and when they told me their age, I was honestly shocked as they acted nothing like it! I was so happy to be able to work with them for the week, they told me that I had made their week an amazing one, but they also did that for me, my week would not have been the same without them. Being around people whose loved ones are suffering with illnesses or have a disability and their absolute love for them showed me that I need to be more thankful for my amazing life. Lourdes is an amazingly spiritual and moving place, full of individuals who are united by their faith and love for God. Working with the pilgrims, going to mass, and all the other activities that were on offer all filled me with joy and peace. Lourdes has given me memories that will last a lifetime. I am so grateful to have been given this opportunity.” **Dylan**

“I came to Lourdes, as a person who was looking for an opportunity to not only connect with myself and my inner thoughts and faith but also to connect with the world around me.

Lourdes opened my eyes and allowed me to see the world from a new perspective. It filled me with gratitude and love and made my heart feel pure and full. Lourdes is so special and has now created a place within me that I will forever remember. Lourdes will be a core memory that I will cherish forever.” **Hattie**



“My experience of Lourdes is something I cannot even begin to express or put into words. The connections I made and people I met are irreplaceable, and sharing my first pilgrimage experience with them on our spiritual journey through life was so special. Lourdes fills you with emotions that you've never felt before, and it is a place for everyone, no matter what you believe.” **Anna**



“Lourdes was by far the best trip I have been on. I made so many fabulous memories and met the most incredible people. I enjoyed every second of it! Laughed till my tummy hurt and smiled till my mouth ached, attended more Masses in one week than I have ever done before, but wouldn't change a thing. If I had the opportunity to go again, I would take it in a heartbeat.” **Ffion**

“Going to Lourdes was a truly eye-opening experience which allowed for me to be able to open my eyes to not only the privilege I have here at home with a family that a love and a healthy life. But also, all the ways that my life could be better through reflection, love, and kindness. I was able to make memories with people I might never meet again but have impacted my life for the better and I will remember those moments for the rest of my life.” **Zara**

“Going to Lourdes completely changed my perspective on life. It made me realise how I often overlook the little things that matter in my everyday life. Seeing people's strong belief and hope in their faith and having moments of deep reflection made me appreciate even the simplest and most ordinary things that I used to take for granted.” **Ella**

“Lourdes was an incredible experience filled with so many amazing memories which I will cherish forever. One moment that felt most special to me was playing card games with the sick pilgrims during our last shift at the Accueil. The happiness, friendship and joy surrounding the table was so touching and definitely made us all very emotional. It was this moment that made me realise what a true connection I made with not only the place, but the people there too. I cannot wait to go back to Lourdes someday, it was the most extraordinary week.” **Patrycja**



Going on pilgrimage to Lourdes is something that is difficult to put into words.

Asking staff and students to give up their half term after exam season can be challenging. It is an exhausting week, yet we have returned invigorated, spiritually renewed, with friendships made to last forever.

The week together couldn't have been so successful without the dedication of our teachers - Sarah Cumbo, Michelle McKenna and Bethany Sealey, and I am truly thankful to them, and to our wonderful students for all that they did.

And so, to 2024, we are all set to begin fundraising again and we pray for our safe return next year!

Lindsay Cooke
Pilgrimage Leader

St Mary's College, Upper Sixth, Edmund Rice Youth Ambassadors, Sami and Davina reflect on their time as ERI Youth Ambassadors as they complete their journey as students at the College.

In their short time as ambassadors, they have contributed so much to their local and global school community and the College is so thankful for all their drive, hard-work, and determination.

Davina writes

“Being an Edmund Rice International Youth Ambassador is the greatest blessing and highest honour that has enabled me to give the humblest of service within my school community. I strongly believe that every relationship is about giving and receiving. As St Paul asserted, ‘There is more joy in giving than in receiving’ this greatly resonates with why I wanted to become ERI Youth Ambassador for St Mary’s. I have always taken much pride in representing my school and most importantly sharing life values with others through collaboration and reaching out to each other.

As ERI Youth Ambassador, I have been presented the greatest opportunity to; be a leader, a representative, put my faith into action and encourage unity in school and within the wider community. Undoubtedly, the position of St Mary’s ERI Youth Ambassador has provided me a wealth of excellent opportunities that have enabled me to gain skills and knowledge for life and to also give back to the school community. Most importantly is the sense of family through which I have been able to forge new friendships, form a team, work as a team, guide those of a younger age, experience new things together and serve God. Being ERI Youth Ambassador has facilitated my continuous growth into a true and upright citizen of our global village. To be a part of the Edmund Rice global community makes me feel proud, empowered, and connected...

Going forward, I would love to see; a spirit of advocacy, the principle of ‘Think Globally, Act Locally’, inter-school activities and more whole school events which will witness upper school integration with younger years encouraging the development of leadership and harmony. I would love to see the continuation of our current schemes such as our annual Easter Egg collection, our all-year-round Food Collection and Twelve Days of Christmas.

As Dr Sylvia Forchap-Likambi said, at the May 2022 student conference, there is great power in vision and the light it sheds, which leads us to our desired destination. We all come from different walks of life, we are all unique and it is important for us to realise, respect and nurture our individuality and our God given talents. We all have a responsibility as global citizens to share our good qualities for the betterment of all the communities we belong to and the world at large, thus fulfilling God’s dream and our dreams for humanity. Most of all, Edmund Rice International has taught me to be a pioneer of positive change and to be the change we want to see in our world.”

Sami writes

“In my short time as part of the school’s ERI group we have achieved so much! Examples include last year’s charity rugby match, Twelve Days of Christmas campaign, carol singing, and Christmas bake sales which raised over £1500 for CAFOD, and we are currently raising money for the Liverpool Bereavement Services through Jamie’s Crosby Beach prints! By having clear goals in mind and setting specific targets for ourselves, we were able to help those who needed it the most, and that’s something we’re really proud of. I’ve enjoyed seeing more people getting involved, sharing ideas, and getting involved in any way they can! It’s been truly awesome to see what people can do when we have the right ideas in place and utilise our skills - also a big thanks to Mr Lee for his help in facilitating everything! When I leave, I’d like to see ERI develop by getting even more people involved right throughout the school from year 7 all the way to upper sixth. So if you’re reading this and think you have some good ideas to share or even just single campaigns you think you could particularly contribute to please speak to your Edmund Rice Co-ordinator at your school. No help is too little and I’ve seen how much of a difference our school community can make. I believe ERI at St Mary’s has the potential to just keep growing and I can’t wait to hear how it develops in the years to come. It’s been an absolute pleasure being the ambassador this past year, and good luck to everyone with their future campaigns!”





St Mary's College held a special event to celebrate the achievements of the 'Class of 2023', the Upper Sixth Formers who leave the school this summer

The Leavers' Mass, held in the school's O'Halloran Hall, named after Brother Denis O'Halloran, was attended by family and friends of the students, and was followed by the presentation of awards by former Head of Sixth Form, Carole Killen.

Students were honoured for their efforts in a wide range of fields including sport, music, drama, outreach, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and the Combined Cadet Force.

Earlier in the day, they had attended a farewell buffet lunch with their teachers in the Sixth Form Common Room.

Commenting on the event, St Mary's Principal, Mike Kennedy, said:

"The Leavers' Mass is always an occasion for mixed emotions, and this was very much the case again this year. As always, we are sorry to be losing such an outstanding group of young people, but we know they are ready to move on to the next exciting stage of their lives. We wish them all every success and look forward to hearing about their achievements in the future."

Edmund's People

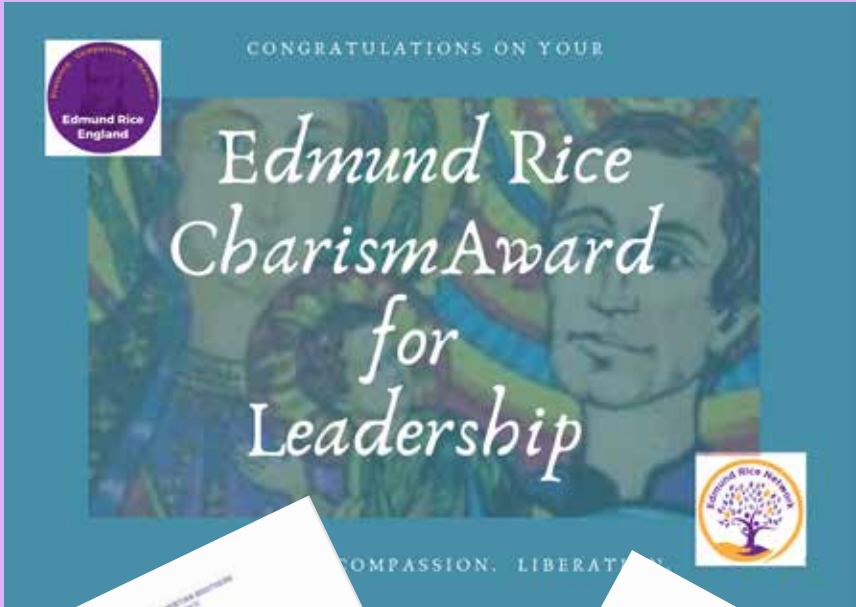
Congratulations!

EDMUND RICE
CHARISM AWARDS
FOR LEADERSHIP 2023

Each year we recognise adults within our Network who have made & are making an outstanding contribution to the Edmund Rice Mission & who demonstrate true service to their school and /or community.

Congratulations to staff, governors and other adults in ministry that have received the award this summer.

We also thank school leaders for taking the time to nominate award recipients and for writing such wonderful citations for them.





EDMUND RICE NETWORK: EVENTS CALENDAR FOR SCHOOLS 2023

Useful dates

What	When	Where
Year 7 Induction sessions with ER Office	September	In school or online
New Staff / Governors' Induction	September 26 th	Woodeaves
Justice Desk South Africa visits to schools	September 26 th - October 15 th	
Schools Conference	October 2 nd -3 rd	Hayes Centre, Derbyshire
Staff Advocacy Workshop	October 5 th	Woodeaves
Primary Schools ER Awards Training Session	October 9 th	Online
Network Gathering	October 10 th 2-4pm	Woodeaves
Heads and Chairs Meeting	October 12 th 11am	Online
Gaudete Trust Schools Event	October 19 th	Venue TBC
Chaplains, Heads of RE Meeting	November 7 th 10am-3pm	Woodeaves'
ASIST Training	November 17 th -18 th	Woodeaves
Staff Street Retreat EREBB Europe	December 4 th -5 th	UK
ERI Youth Ambassadors Training	December 6 th	Venue TBC

Stay up to date with the latest network news and events on our website

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