



June 28, 2015

———— Weekly Reflection ————



"God, grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change,  
which is pretty much everyone, since I'm clearly not you, God.  
At least not the last time I checked.

And while you're at it, God,  
please give me the courage to change what I need to change about myself,  
which is frankly a lot, since, once again, I'm not you, which means I'm not perfect.  
It's better for me to focus on changing myself than to worry about changing other people,  
who, as you'll no doubt remember me saying, I can't change anyway.

Finally, give me the wisdom to just shut up whenever I think that I'm clearly smarter  
than everyone else in the room,  
that no one knows what they're talking about except me, or that I alone have all the answers.

Basically, God, grant me the wisdom to remember that I'm not you. Amen





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### **EDMUND RICE KIDS IN TAMALE**

A month or so after our arrival in Tamale for the two-year novitiate program, we were asked to seek a suitable weekend ministry of our own interest apart from the Tuesday weekly ministry. We were to give our choice of ministry to the formation team in three weeks.

I kept noticing a number of kids playing along on the road, throwing stones, climbing mango trees, etc. This was also noticed by my fellow novice, Melcky. One of the days Melcky and I were walking home from morning Mass, we were discussing which ministry each would join, from the many choices of catechism, youth ministry, choir etc. Seeing the kids playing around because they were out of school gave us an idea.

After personal reflection and frequent discussions between us, we came up with the idea of bringing the kids together and playing with them. It was easy to come up with a name because both of us had similar idea - hence the name **EDMUND RICE KIDS**. We thought of other novices who might like to be part of it and so we talked to a number of them. After presenting our idea we were joined by three like-minded and very able novices, Ackim Simasiku and Joseph Kapalu from Zambia, and Edwin Saka from Kenya. Together with Brother Martin Binyenya, our patron, we are **THE EDMUND RICE KIDS TEAM (ERKT)**.



After this we did a publication and invited the kids. On the first day only six kids showed up. Nevertheless we played some games and sang songs and then gave them some refreshments. We were a little disappointed by the turn-up, but in our review meeting decided not to do any further publication but let nature take its course. We decided to wait and see what would happen the following week before we made another decision.





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The following week, to our surprise, the number rose to thirty. This was beyond our expectations. Since then the number has steadily risen, and now, after two months, we host around 100 to 140 kids every Saturday from the neighborhood villages. Their ages range from 2 years (their older siblings carry them along) to 13 years.

As ERKT, we have our own policies and rules that guide us in our activities. Each member has to fully commit himself to the activities of the group. Policies and rules we've set must always be followed by members at all times.



Our programme of activities happens every Saturday morning from 9am to 11am. The kids always gather at the basketball court, we say a prayer, usually Islamic, then proceed to the football pitch where we separate the kids according to their age and gender and play different games. These include: sack races, rope skipping, tug of war, football, and "Aim and I Miss", which is the girls' favorite and is played using a tennis ball.

Apart from playing, we also give a brief talk about good morals, how to live in good relations with each other despite the religious differences, and to respect and appreciate each other's religion.





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We have also done information and data collection and have details of the kids. We have the profile of each of them, including the names of both the parents or guardian and their occupation. During our visits when we were collecting data, we noticed that almost all the kids come from very poor families, and some can't afford a decent meal even once a day.

The novitiate community, through the formation team, has been very supportive in all aspects of our ministry, offering ideas and advice on how to improve our activities. They have also been providing biscuits and sweets for the kids. Once when the schools were about to restart, which came simultaneously with the feast day of Blessed Edmund Rice, the school-going kids were given stationery items, such as books, pens, and geometrical sets. The formation team has also helped us get a few items needed for games. With all this, every Saturday is a happy day which we always look forward to.

**Kelvin Otieno (Tamale Novice)**

### **MARY RICE CENTRE REMEMBERED IN TASMANIA**



Last Friday at St Virgil's College, Hobart, Tasmania, the Mary Rice Centre Nairobi was remembered on the school's 2015 Half-Way Day. The students participated in a Walkathon to raise funds in solidarity with their Kenyan friends. Later in the day, two teams of senior students competed in the Mary Rice Soccer Game. Their uniforms bore the names of students at the Mary Rice Centre.





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St Virgil's College has a close connection with the Mary Rice Centre, with Principal Damian Messer and Development Officer Mark Waddington visiting the Centre in recent years.

### **EDMUND RICE KARIBU KIBERA ACTIVITIES**

On Saturday, June 20, 24 leaders volunteered to be allocated to six Kibera schools, including one secondary, for outreach. The focus was on the children, developing confidence and self-esteem. The session took an average of two hours. Again, teachers largely welcomed our leaders and the kids were involved and open. A good debriefing and evaluation took place back at the Otiende community. The leader reports suggested that they are very satisfied that they are making an impact on the lives of the children.

A sudden cancellation of our venue at Regina Pacis University on June 27 necessitated a frantic search by Sammy Muga and myself for a good site. The exploration had its benefits. In the long run, we opted for the old Mary Rice/Edmund Rice Centre, which was warmly welcomed by the old timers. The feature of the camp was the inclusion of Tom Purcell's Zimele youth group, and what a wonderful bunch of young men and women they are, totally integrating themselves into our group, relationship-wise, besides being heartily involved in all the activities. It was good camp, full of energy and joy and creativity.

I think our leaders performed better than usual as they had to prove themselves in front of the visitors. The kids were amazing in the way they co-operated whole heartedly and made interesting afternoon presentations. There was a touch of nostalgia with the appearance of Declan and Francis Hall who, in typical fashion, engaged the youth leaders in fruitful conversation.

**Br. Peter Cole**





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## **BIRTHDAYS IN JULY**

JULY 7	JOHN PAUL OLUOCH STEPHEN WANDABUSI
JULY 16	FRANCIS NKWABI
JULY 26	GERALD MGALULA

## **CALENDAR**

June 28-July 4	PLT Retreat (Subiaco Centre, Nairobi)
July 5-20 July 16-17	PLT visitation of the District DLT Review Days
August 9-14 August 10-14	AP Brothers workshop with Br. John Casey (CLT) PLT meeting
September 4-6 September 12 September 19	Child Protection Workshop Nairobi Cluster meeting Arusha Cluster meeting

Many Blessings,

Tony Shanahan (Acting Editor)

