

## EUROPEAN PROVINCE UPDATES

Vol V Issue 21, December 13, 2013

### **Christmas/End of Year**

As we approach Christmas and the end of 2013 we give thanks for the gift of life. We remember all those who have entered eternal life in the past year and we pray for all the bereaved

We call to mind our sacred planet and how much it is at risk because of the way we humans treat it. John Gibbons in an article in the Irish Times (Dec. 5, 2013) quotes Pope Francis: *'The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenceless before the interests of a deified market.'*



On Friday Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, the Blasket Centre in Dún Chaoin, will host the Irish premiere of *Aluna*. This film has been made by the film-maker, Alan Ereira, in conjunction with the Kogi people who live high in the mountains of Colombia. *'The Kogi call themselves the 'elder brothers' of the human race, and believe they are charged with the task of holding the health of the planet in balance. The world's general population, which the Kogi refer to as the younger brothers, are precipitating a major ecological crisis that threatens the planet's survival, evidenced by the changes the Kogi have witnessed in their mountain environment.'* (Irish Times Dec. 10, 2013)



**Get well wishes and prayers for all our Brothers who are currently ill, some of whom are in hospital at this time.**

### ***Br. Brian Molloy – Volunteer Ireland Award***

Brian earned this award for his work as a volunteer with DePaul since Oct. 2012, meeting people who had been homeless and encouraging some of them to work on their Life Story books.

Orla Mc Andrew nominated Brian for the Volunteer Ireland Award saying "Brian has a warmth, dignity and compassion that service users respond to in kind. It has been a moving experience to witness the gentleness with which he treats service users and how they meet him with an equal capacity. He is a deeply caring man and service users see this and respond to him in the same way"

14,500 volunteers were represented at the Awards ceremony. Of these, 741 had been nominated by their respective volunteer organizations. A panel of judges shortlisted 31 volunteers for Certificates and Brian was one of three volunteers who received a certificate in the Social Work category. Heartiest congratulations to Brian for a well deserved honour.



### ***Recent Moves***

Colm Griffey will be finishing in his role as Assistant Director CORI at the end of the year. We congratulate Colm on the work he has done with CORI. He was held in the highest esteem by the officers and staff in CORI. Colm will begin a new role with ERD in February 2014.

Br. John Joe Cahill has gone to Baldoye for a period.

## Fund Raising for Sierra Leone 2014

A group of Sixth Formers from St Mary's College in Crosby have been busy fundraising to send a team of 10 delegates to Sierra Leone in January 2014. The immersion will be the second such visit by students from St Mary's and the first under the direction of Nicola Addy, a Science teacher at the College.

Students are looking forward to forging new links with Sengbeh Pieh REC School in the Hamilton area of the country and have been planning lessons in Art, Science, Geography, English and Drama that they hope to deliver to children who attend the school. They will also be working as teaching assistants during the immersion, helping the teachers at the school by working with small groups during more routine lessons.

The St Mary's group has really shown their commitment to the project through their fundraising efforts and their team spirit is impressive indeed. From a sponsored Snowdon climb, to a fundraising barbecue, several rounds of bag-packing at local supermarkets, cake sales, X-Box tournaments, raffles and wrist-band sales, members of the group have been both supportive of each other and dedicated to raising the money needed to fund the trip.

The students ran a stall at the school's Autumn Fayre, where they sold numerous hand-made items that they crafted themselves. These included African themed jewellery, Sierra Leone T-shirts, bath bombs and bath salts, festive prints and tree decorations, candles, bunting and fairy cakes.

As the departure date approaches, the students are filled with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. They are determined to make a contribution to the lives of the children they meet in Hamilton and all hope that the new links forged with Sengbeh Pieh will be long and fruitful for all.

*Nicola Addy, St. Mary's College, Crosby,  
Liverpool*

## News from the CHRISP project.

To celebrate Refugee Week a group from the CHRISP (Christian Brother and Spiritan Priests collaboration) project visited St Joseph's College, Stoke-on-Trent. Four of our Asylum Seekers told their stories to students and staff who listened intently to the struggles and sadness of leaving their home countries for a safer life in the U.K.

Some comments by the student include:

- Even though many people refer to immigrants as illegal and bad, refugees have been suffering in their own country. We need to help them to gain a happy and enjoyable lives in the UN countries that they want help from.
- People should stop stereotyping other people; don't believe everything you read or hear
- Refugees still need help when they get here.

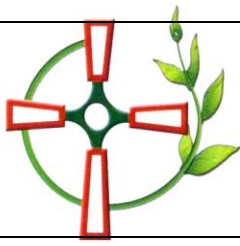
Pictured below is our group sharing lunch at St Joseph's. Our relationship with the college is strengthening with the Christmas Parties provided by the college and a BBQ for asylum seeking families this summer. In addition to this brother Ger O'Connell accompanied staff and students on their immersion trip to Sierra Leone.



## *Launch of Strategic Plan (2014 – 2016) for the Artane School of Music*

Recently in Croke Park, the CB and GAA Trustees of the School of Music attended the launch of an ambitious Strategic Plan for the future of the school. There was a large attendance at this launch, including the Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Mr. Jimmy Dennyhan.

Proceeds were conducted by Mr. Michael ÓMuircheartaigh and entertainment was provided by the Artane Band.



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### *Seeing Another Way of Making a Difference St. Joseph's, Stoke on Trent*



On the 17th October, we started our journey to Geneva, Switzerland, to visit the United Nations. We stayed with the Christian Brothers community in Gaillard - just outside of Geneva. The Brothers here, Brian Bond, Moy Hitchen and Peter Harney, make up the Edmund Rice International team. All in all, they could not have been more welcoming. We shared evening prayers and meals with them. During the day we travelled to the United Nations in order to view the 17th session of the Universal Periodic Review.

The aim of doing this was to understand the role Edmund Rice International has in influencing the human rights of different countries. We learned how the process works and also what impact the Christian Brothers can have on human rights issues all over the world. Sitting in on the conference was inspiring, and seeing the ambassadors gathered together from all countries of the world was an experience that neither of us will ever forget.

At St Josephs College, the pupils are all aware of the work of the Brothers in places such as Sierra Leone. However, outside of the immersion projects, it had not occurred to many of us that there was much more work that could be done to help others. It was a shock to both of us to discover just how influential the Brothers and other NGO's can be at the United Nations.

One of the most exciting reviews we witnessed was that of Israel; the room was full representatives from NGO's like Edmund Rice International and UN member states. Because Israel failed to attend its previously scheduled review, many other countries were keen to express their recommendations and opinions. It became clear

that countries from all corners of the world are keen to help each other to improve human rights.

The week has made us re-analyse priorities when it comes to campaigning for human rights. We are all aware of the importance of fundraising and financial support for charities. However, something that we have learned during our time in Geneva is that we need to focus more on the roots of the problem. Sometimes, help in terms of knowledge is a lot more valuable than just giving money.

The whole trip was surreal; to be witness to such instrumental decisions was a great opportunity. The Christian Brothers shared stories with us of their travels all over the world and we learned so much from the time we spent there, it was a pleasure to share the week with them. Overall the experience was unforgettable, and we have both left with a dream to end up back at the UN in the future, permanently.

*- ERI Youth Ambassador Georgia Kliment-Temple &  
Jacob Cook, St Joseph's Stoke on Trent, England*

### ***Edmund Rice Network***

Jessica Dewhurst is a member of the Edmund Rice Network in South Africa. She is a 21 year old College student at present in her final year of a Social Studies degree. She is Chairperson of ERA, ER International Youth Ambassador and also Southern African District Youth Coordinator of the ERN. Jess visited Ireland in 2010 to meet up with ER Network and travelled the length and breadth of the country to get a snapshot of the ministries and initiatives of Edmund Rice followers in his home country. She made many friends while in Ireland and returned the following year to reconnect with Camp Leaders and re-establish friendships.

All those who met her here (and there were many people!) will no doubt be very happy to hear that Jess was recently awarded President Zuma's Gold Medal for Youth Empowerment in South Africa. She can be contacted at :  
[jessdewy@hotmail.com](mailto:jessdewy@hotmail.com)



**The Cork Life Centre's Annual Craft Fair** took place on Wednesday, December 11th. Staff and students had been working together for the previous weeks creating birdhouses; mosaics; wreaths; cakes; stockings; jewellery; decorations and much more. The Centre opened to the public for the night, and staff, students, families, and friends of the Centre all came along to enjoy lucky dips, raffles and games, as well as to sample the many crafts on offer. There was a great turn out and an enjoyable night was had by all, while the students were delighted to see their masterpieces sell.

Preparations are now underway for the Centre's next event, the Annual Christmas Dinner, which will be held next week. The Staff and Students of Cork Life Centre would like to wish everyone in the Edmund Rice Family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



### **Obituary Notice – Brendan Donohoe**

Brendan Donohoe, a former pupil of the Christian Brothers, was educated at O Connells Schools and entered Aer Lingus in 1962 and quickly rose through the ranks.

He had several postings abroad and became finance director of Kenya Airways in Nairobi. The Donohoe homes abroad quickly became centres of expatriate gatherings with their residence in Lusaka a relaxing rendezvous for Irish Christian Brothers working in remote areas while their house in Nairobi was a similar missionary haven. Having a lasting regard for the Brothers, Donohoe held his alma mater in unflinching esteem.

*Taken from Irish Times Obituaries Nov 30, 2013*

### **New Community in Buenos Aires**

The Brothers moved into their new residence during the first week of Advent 2013 in the district of Vicente López. Renato Llerena Lanza from Perú and Michael Lynch from Ireland have spent their time in Buenos Aires travelling and participating in various groups to learn more about the diverse works of Newman College and the parishes of Vicente López.

In November, the Brothers met with Álvaro Rolón, a facilitator in community building and encouraged them to search for ways to develop creativity among themselves and construct new ways of being community.

In December, Max Alexander, a Benedictine monk, met with each Brother privately and then again as a community. They will meet up again in February in a Benedictine monastery and spend time there under his direction. They also met with Juan Pablo Berrea, an ex Dominican Provincial, who dedicates his time to helping groups communicate at a deep level.

Renato and Michael will return to their former communities in December and January to culminate their activities in their missions. They will return in early February to take part in a Mission organised by Newman College and return to their house to continue with the community formation before inviting others to join them.

### **Smaoineamh – ‘A Thought’**

**EXTINCTION THREAT IN EUROPE** The destruction of natural habitats in Europe is wiping out butterfly, beetle and dragonfly species across the region, the updated European "Red List" of endangered species showed. Scientists examining Europe's 435 butterfly species found that the populations of one in three species are falling and nine percent are already threatened with extinction. Their main threat is habitat loss, most often caused by changes in agricultural practices, either through intensification or abandonment, or to climate change, forest fires and the expansion of tourism. For dragonflies, it is the depletion of freshwater resources that is causing these species to drop in numbers. Five percent of dragonfly species are threatened with global extinction, while some 11 percent are considered to be near threatened within Europe. [from the scientific website <http://phys.org/news>]