



# Christian Brothers Today



## *Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America Province*

Winter 2018 ☐ Vol. 24 ☐ No. 15

*Edmund Rice*<sup>®</sup>

**Edmund Rice Education Australia Congress**  
**September 07 - 09, 2018**  
**Melbourne, Australia**



***Contributed by Maureen Kiers, Co-Director***  
***ERCBNA Office of Educational Services***



Maureen Kiers

Last fall I was invited by Wayne Tinsey, Executive Director and Brian Garrone, Director of Communication and Global Partnership for Edmund Rice Education Australia, to attend the EREA Congress this September. The Congress was held at the Melbourne Park Function Centre (next to the Rod Laver Tennis Center). It brought together about 250 “members of the school communities and representatives from Edmund Rice schools internationally, members of the leadership teams of the Christian Brothers, leaders in Catholic education and other partners across the Church and society.” Besides myself, the international guests included representatives from India, Ireland, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia. Brothers Hugh O’Neill and Julian McDonald represented the Congregational Leadership Team.

The purpose of the Congress was to “bring the national community together – listen, reflect, experience, provide our voice, model innovative ways of interacting, learning and celebrating, and ultimately determine new horizons for our family of schools.” There was clearly a concern about the indigenous peoples of Australia and the themes of inclusion and reparation were repeated throughout our time there.



The theme of the Congress, *Charting New Horizons*, included talks on the four touchstones of EREA: Gospel Spirituality, Justice and Solidarity, Inclusive Community and Liberating Education. Guest speakers in these areas included Senator Patrick Dodson, the only indigenous person with that title and called the Father of Reconciliation; Fr. Frank Brennan, S.J., the CEO of Catholic Social Service Services Australia; Kirsty Sword-Gusmao, Goodwill Ambassador for Education and former First Lady of Timor-Leste; Emma Alberici, Chief Economics Correspondent for ABC (Australia). Leoni Degenhardt, Emeritus Dean of the AIS Leadership Centre, served as the Facilitator and Fr. Kevin Hennessey, a Passionist priest, was the Congress Liturgical Guide.

The day before the Congress opened, the international representatives met at the EREA Centre. Several people had been to the Chapter Meeting in Nairobi in 2014, so there was follow-up on the subject of Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders (EREBB). Topics discussed were developing identity, i.e., having schools commit to leading others in EREBB; and sharing identity resources to do more internationally to help those schools with fewer resources. Also proposed was the possibility of schools “twinning”, virtually or otherwise, so that partnerships may be established and resources shared. It was noted that world-wide, the Edmund Rice schools have a resource base of nearly 20,000 teachers. One item on the minds of several of the participants was the education in the charism of Edmund Rice of new school leaders. It was also suggested that each school appoint a staff member to be the communicator to EREBB.

Part of our work as international representatives was to participate in a panel discussion covering our experiences of an Edmund Rice education from our cultural perspectives, and the importance of developing global links between our schools. It was an honor to be part of this discussion and opened

my eyes to the realities of schools in countries that do not have the same resources that we in North America have.



*Maureen Kiers with the microphone*

What a privilege to have participated in this Congress – the hospitable people, the wonderful food, the stimulating conversations, the beautiful weather, the opportunity to visit that part of the world - are all something I will not forget. Recognizing that we are part of a vibrant and diverse international community and using that strength should be a great step in moving all of our schools forward.



# St. Mary's Academy - Roseau, Dominica

## One Year Later



The evening of Monday, 18 September 2017 – and well into the morning hours of the next day – was an experience that will be remembered by all who lived through Hurricane Maria, a category 5 storm that brought havoc and utter devastation to this tiny island nation. As the valedictorian of St. Mary's Academy that year so aptly said, "Life as we knew it, is no more." One year later, recovery and rebuilding is still going on – and will continue for some time. But, thanks to the donors of the Christian Brothers Hurricane Relief Fund, some of that recovery and rebuilding was made possible.

### Br. Jim DePiro

The sum of \$214,000 EC (\$104,000 CD; \$80,000 US) was donated and dispensed from December through June of 2018. The St. Mary's Academy, the Alpha Centre, the Brothers' Community, several other church institutions and dozens of families were helped with aid to rebuild and to recover. The availability of these funds did not, however, speed things along. Soaring prices, congestion and confusion at the port, a shortage of building supplies and lack of workers added to the emergencies and frustrations. Windows, parts of the roof, appliances, gutters, pipe work, electrical and plumbing were all repaired in the Brothers' house for a total of \$11,600 EC. (\$5500 CD; \$4370 US). The community residence, though, suffered very little compared to tens of thousands of other residences and commercial buildings. Some estimates indicated that over 29,000 structures island-wide sustained significant damage.



**View of the Brothers' yard from dining room morning after Maria**

The Alpha Centre, a school that serves the handicapped, is directed by Brother Raymond Philogene. It suffered tremendous damage to both the outside and inside of its buildings. After it reopened in early December, plans to repair and rebuild began. A little over \$74,000 EC (\$37,000 CD; \$27,700 US) was given to the Centre to assist in its recovery projects.



Above are the after and before pictures of the inner courtyard of the Alpha Centre

St. Mary's Academy sustained minimal damage compared to many other schools. A little bit of the roof of one wing, some classes lost ceiling panels, the small structure housing one classroom, the sports room, the canteen and the brother's laundry room lost its roof and thus internal damage was done. The music room and the school's computer room lost just about everything. A significant amount of the donated funds was used to provide a food program for about five dozen students whose families were economically impacted from the storm. About \$12,000 EC (\$6,000 CD; \$4,500 US) went to this project. Much of the remaining funds given to SMA - \$57,000 EC - was used for repairs, clean-up and replacement of school equipment and supplies (\$28,500 CD; \$21,000 US). As time went on, many families began facing lost wages and employment. As a result, some of the money was used to assist families in tuition assistance (\$3,400 EC; \$1,700 CD; \$1,200 US).

Below, left, is the view of the area off the Brother's kitchen that contains its laundry room and the building for the sports room, canteen and classroom. It was out of this area that the food program was housed (below right).



Several teachers volunteered their time to shop, cook and distribute lunches. As time went on, it was evident that many families in some of the outlying villages needed assistance in order to repair their homes. So, the Brothers were able, thanks to the generosity of the benefactors to the relief fund, to provide over \$32,000 EC (\$16,000 CD; \$12,100 US) for families in Tareau, Mahaut, Soufriere, Scotts Head and surrounding areas. Roofing and building supplies, bedding and furniture, clothing, school supplies and food were purchased to assist dozens of families. In addition, the following institutions were assisted: St. Mary's Primary School in Roseau; St. Luke's Primary School in the hard-hit village of Pointe Michel; St. Patrick's Parish – which saw its roof collapse - in Grand Bay; and CALLS, a school for dropouts in the city of Portsmouth – the Brothers ministered there for a number of years. The \$22,500 EC (\$11,200 CD; \$8,400 US) was able to assist these schools and parishes in their rebuilding efforts and/or to assist families.

While most schools began to re-open four weeks after the storm – mainly to accommodate the older students to ready them for CSEC exams – it wasn't until well into January of 2018 that schools around the island were fully in operation. By the end of October, St. Mary's Academy was in full operation. In December, the Alpha Centre fully returned to classes. Both of these schools, though, saw a number of students absent from rolls due to overseas migration. Lack of internet service hampered many students as they moved forward in their education. St. Mary's Academy, as did many other schools, became used extensively after school and on the weekends as centers of work to accommodate. One year later, the extensive damage done by Hurricane Maria is still evident island-wide; much has yet be done. While power has been restored throughout much of the country, many are still without power because to the

inability to adequately repair homes. Many rural mountainous villages are still in need of supplies, repairs and resources to do so.

So, on behalf of the people who have been beneficiaries – directly and indirectly – of the generosity of the North American Province of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers and our benefactors, Brother Raymond Philogene and I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude. Please, keep us and the people of Dominica in your prayers as recovery and rebuilding continue. And, be assured of ours.



**A number of the graduates of SMA whose families received assistance**



EDMUND RICE  
**CHRISTIAN  
BROTHERS**  
NORTH AMERICA

**PRESENCE COMPASSION LIBERATION**

Check out our new website

[www.ercbna.org](http://www.ercbna.org)

Cover Photo: “St. Francis of Assisi”

Watercolor with Gold Leaf by Brother C. Michael Valdes, CFC  
©Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Art Foundation, LTD

Check out the US Catholic Bishops’ Statement on Racism:  
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>

## ***A Chance in Life* journeys to the Latin American Region**

A Chance in Life (ACL) is the international extension of Boys Towns of Italy, Inc. The United States based charity, in service abroad since 1945, supports programs for children and young adults, emphasizing the role of youth as protagonists in their own growth and development and that of their community. It continues the work of Monsignor John Patrick Carroll-Abbing as expressed in the self-governing youth communities he founded in Rome and other parts of Italy.

These youth villages, once the home to the orphans of World War II, and then communities for teens from broken homes, eventually became the receiving centers for hundreds of youth fleeing the wars, famines, and political unrest of a troubled world.

In recent years, the Board of Directors of A Chance in Life, with the leadership of its president, Gabriele Delmonaco, has reached out to lands from which young people are fleeing. The goal is to support the development of initiatives that will foster possibilities for these children, teens, young men and women, to create a future for themselves in their own homeland. It has touched into the lives of poor children in Ethiopia and India, assisting existing works to expand their impact and outreach. ACL offers consultation, professional development and financial support.

In late May of this year, Mr. Delmonaco welcomed the invitation of Brother Hugo Cáceres, CFC, Latin American Region Leader of the Congregation of Christian Brothers, to visit the ministries of the Brothers in Peru and Bolivia. Elser Llanos, coordinator of the LAR development office, arranged an engaging experience of projects reaching out to the margins of society.

An overnight bus ride from Lima to Chimbote brought the visitors to Collegio Mundo Major, a remarkably successful school ever extending its offerings to accommodate the poorer children of this fish processing city. Beyond the city is a new area created by the “invasion” of hundreds of families who came hoping for employment that never materialized. Typical of the community engagement model that has characterized the development of the Brothers’ ministries in Latin America, two brothers, Charles Fitzsimmons from Chicago, and Edward Sean DiFiglia from New Jersey, have set up a modest home base in the midst of the confusion, engaging in a shared effort to create a better tomorrow. They are paying particular attention to the need of the children for educational and cultural stimulation and the dynamics of families overwhelmed by stress.

The next stop was the Fe y Alegria school in the Canto Grande section of Lima, and the surrounding rock hills where many of the houses were constructed by mission immersion groups from the Brothers’ schools and colleges in the United States, Canada, Australia, Uruguay and Argentina. Mid-journey, Mr. Delmonaco was moved to send the following Constant Contact to ACL Board, benefactors and friends.





### **Where the Paved Road Ends**

June 2018

What is señora Carmen doing on top of those rocks in San Juan de Lurigancho in Perú? She is simply leaving her home to go to the market to buy food for her family. Her house, a shack made of scrap materials, was put together overnight on a hilly area near Lima.

Like señora Carmen, thousands of poor and desperate families leave the mountains to relocate closer to the city where they hope to find work. Brother Steve of the Congregation of Christian Brothers has been working with volunteers to build better and safer homes for these families for almost a decade. Here in Perú, this phenomenon of migration and, in most cases, illegal occupation of land is called “human invasion.”

“A few weeks ago,” Br. Steve explained pointing to a desert hill, “there was another human invasion. The police intervened with helicopters to chase away these desperate people. They ran away, but they will be back soon. They do not have any other place to go.”

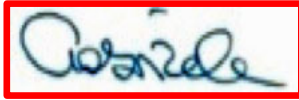
Br. Sean Moffett and I visited several of these shacks, like the one of señora Carmen. A family of five or more lives in one room with no water, no sewer system and sometimes no electricity. Children play with abandoned tires or homemade soccer balls on the dusty streets.

Nearby, down the hills, the Christian Brothers provide their services to the “Fe y Alegría” (Faith and Joy) school where most of these children can get an education and a nutritious meal every day.



The requests from these desperate families cannot be met by the Christian Brothers alone and A Chance In Life is considering supporting them. "We work where the paved streets end and the desert begins," said Br. Richard, a volunteer at the school. And in San Juan de Lurigancho, there is a vast desert filled with families whose children are looking for a chance in life.

Let's change that. Together we can.

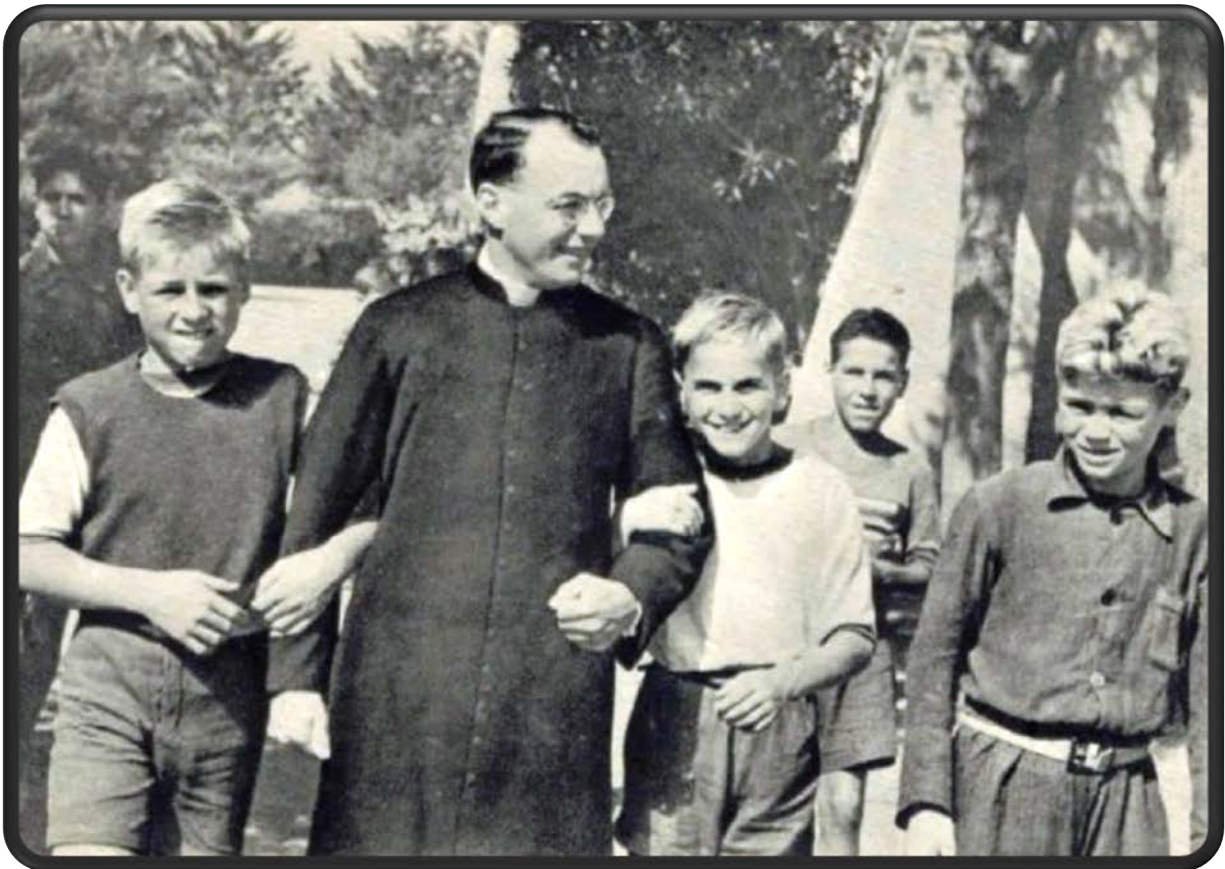


**Gabriele Delmonaco**

**Our Mailing Address:**

**A Chance In Life  
250 East 63rd Street, Suite  
204  
New York, NY 10065**

The message preceded a visit to the Centro Hermano Manolo in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Welcomed by one of the recent graduates of the program, Mr. Delmonaco, was struck by the similarity of this work to the initial post-war project of Monsignor Carroll-Abbing, "L'Albergo Sciusia" – the hotel for shoe shine boys. Again it was a train station and its surrounding markets that provided children with opportunities to eke out an existence earning the cost of their daily bread by efforts, legal and non. Here he experienced a clarion call for A Chance in Live to become engaged in this labor of love.



1946 Monsignor Carroll-Abbing and his "ragazzi", Civitavecchia, Italia.



2018 Centro Hermano Manolo, Cochabamba, Bolivia.

On June 12, 2018, the ACL Board of Directors enthusiastically welcomed the proposal to extend its mission to the Latin American Region. Initial grants will focus on Centro Hermano Manolo in Cochabamba, Bolivia, and the Proyecto Alcanzando Nuevos Horizontes in Nuevo Chimbote, Peru.

## **Christian Brothers Community Tampa, Florida**

*Celebrating the life of an Edmundian*



On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the life of former Christian Brother and Edmundian, Bob Siccone, was celebrated at a lovely Requiem Mass offered by Fr. Jack Costello. An overflowing crowd of Christian Brothers, Edmundians, some spouses of former Christian Brothers, and many friends and family members of Bob, filled Saint Joseph's Church in Bradenton, Florida, to celebrate the life of this marvelous man. The many eulogists, who spoke at the service, painted a very accurate portrait of this warm, caring, merry prankster whose memory will long live in our hearts. May the angels lead him into paradise!

## **A Legacy Gift to Iona College from the Mount St. Francis Community, St. John's, Newfoundland**

The Brothers of the Mount Saint Francis Community have donated the core of their “Monastery” Library to Iona College. The gift, suggested by Brother J. Bertrand Darcy, was carried forward through an intensive cataloging and shipping collaboration involving Brothers Darcy, Gordon Raphael Bellows, Richard Fowler, Mr. Richard Palladino, Director of Iona Libraries, the Ryan Library Staff, Mr. Paul Sutera, Iona Vice President for Advancement, Casey DelliCarpini, Executive Assistant to the Senior Vice President for Advancement & External Affairs, and the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Art Foundation.



**Mount St. Francis St. John's, NL**  
Residence of the Christian Brothers.  
From *Benevolent Irish Society (St. John's, NL),  
Centenary volume, Benevolent Irish Society  
of St. John's, NL, 1806-1906*  
(Cork, Ireland: Guy & Co., 1906) p 66.



**Mount St. Francis  
St. John's, NL**  
Residence of the Christian Brothers.  
As it is today, 2018

With publications and first editions dating back to the 1700's, extensive representations of classics in literature, history and spirituality, the collection attests to the scholarship of the Brothers who have gathered these books since the founding of their initial St. John's, Newfoundland community, in 1875. Brothers Darcy and Bellows had done research on the library, identified rare books and brought to the attention of Province Leadership the considerable value of the collection. Some of the Congregational Publications were integrated into the Archives of the Province; the rest were proposed as a gift to the Iona College Library to which Mr. Palladino responded with great enthusiasm.




**Ryan Library, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY. 2018**

The books arrived in New Rochelle on June 15. Mr. Palladino indicated that a number of the works will be incorporated into the general collection; others will become part of the college archives and special collections including the College's developing collection of publications related to Edmund Rice and the Christian Brothers.

## Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer Cards

*Pray for us*



***Founder of the Christian Brothers  
and the Presentation Brothers***

Edmund Rice was born in 1762 in Callan, County Kilkenny, Ireland. After completing his education, he moved to Waterford and was appointed to an uncle, a supplier to the many ships visiting its growing port.

Edmund eventually took over the expanding business and prospered. In 1785 he married Mary Ellen, but soon after the birth of their only child in 1789, she died. The girl, named after his wife, was raised by Edmund with the help of his orphans.

Because Catholic education was at the time denied to Ireland's poor, Edmund decided to right the wrong. In 1802 he began the ministry of educating and caring for young boys, a mission that continues today. Two congregations, the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers, developed from the foundation laid that year. Edmund guided both, watching them grow in six and a half states, until his death in 1844.

The first Christian Brothers arrived in North America in Newfoundland, Canada, in 1836. Thirty years later the first community in the United States was established in New York City. Today, more than two hundred years after Edmund began his work, Christian Brothers serve on six continents. Among our ministries:

- Teaching and administering in schools and colleges
- Facilitating youth ministry programs
- Performing missionary work
- Educating adults
- Supporting parishes and dioceses
- Ministering to migrant workers
- Caring for the infirm and elderly
- Serving the homeless

In 1996, Edmund was declared "Blessed" by the church -- a major step in the Catholic Church towards sainthood.

A donation has been made to support the ministries of  
The Christian Brothers.

Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America  
200 Wilmot Road  
New Rochelle, New York 10804

will be remembered in the  
daily Masses and devotions of the  
Christian Brothers' communities  
and share in the prayers and good works of the  
Congregation of Christian Brothers  
around the world.

Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

\_\_\_\_\_

for the Christian Brothers

To order email Richard Carter at [rcarter@cbsfoundation.org](mailto:rcarter@cbsfoundation.org)  
Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Foundation  
260 Wilmot Road, New Rochelle, NY 10804

# Memorial Mass for Deceased Brothers, Edmundians, and Associates St. John's, Newfoundland

On Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, Brothers, Edmundians, and Associates and spouses gathered in the Marian Chapel of the Basilica of St. John the Baptist to celebrate a Memorial Mass for deceased Brothers, Edmundians, and Associates. Spouses were invited and some did attend.

After the Mass all were invited to the Brothers residence at Mt. St. Francis for a reception.



First Row: ALma Singleton, Br. Bosco Wakeham, Kevin Veitch, Marie Veitch, Kevin Dormody, Br. Gordon Bellows, Fr. John Costello, Br. Barry Lynch Ray O'Brien, Br. Rick Fowler, Gerri Stapleton, Laura Rodgers, Patsy Connolly, Ed Connolly, Rudy Sigleton  
Second Row: Bob Quigley, Anthony Murphy, Br. Dave Murphy, Dave Dyer, Gerald Roche, Tim Turner, Bill Hurley, Ruth Fallon, Harold Stapleton, Gerry Fallon, Malachy Mandeville, Richard Hall, Br. Harry French, Ed Rodgers, Br. George Fitzpatrick, Bill Hogan, Jean Hall, Gerry Duggan, Mike Penney



New grave site in St. John's, Newfoundland

St. Mary's Academy  
Carbon Footprint Project - Agricultural Science Field



**Br. Jim DePiro**

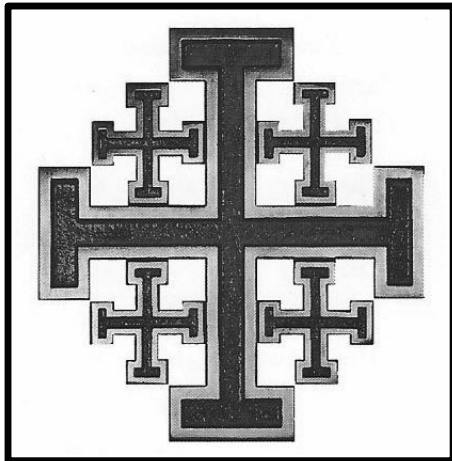
In December of 2015, the St. Mary's Academy was the recipient of an \$800 US gift from the Province Leadership Team as part of its carbon footprint donation. At the time, the school and the island nation of Dominica were still recovering from the passing of Tropical Storm Erika from late August. Project ideas and use of the funds were discussed for months. It was decided that a water tank for the agricultural science field was needed so that a process of irrigation could be instituted. Estimates were sought, plans derived. The target date was the beginning of the school year 2017. But Mother Nature had other ideas. Hurricane Maria ravaged the island and other things had to get done. The money, though, was put aside for the time being. Below is the view of the damaged field behind the school.

Agricultural science is a popular area of study at SMA and an important field of study for the Caribbean region. As part of the syllabus, the students must participate in 'practicals'. In other words, they must ready fields, plant and harvest. And now, there is a business component to the final report which is part of their exam grade at the end of Form 5. Thanks to the \$800 donation, the "Agri Science" classes at SMA were able to have the field restored and seeds, seedlings, fertilizer and tools purchased. Beginning in early April, students, under the direction of Mr. Kenroy Bazil, took part in an extensive farming project. Tomatoes, cabbage, beans, peppers, lettuce and reclaimed banana trees filled the field. Every day between 2 to 4pm, the field was filled with the noise of shovels, rakes, watering and the voices of these young men



enjoying learning. And, it was the perfect distraction needed after what happened with Hurricane Maria. Some of them were assigned weekend duty to water the field. At the end of the time, the products were harvested and sold to people in the area. One of the local grocery stores bought the produce for sale.

## **Brother James Austin Finnegan, C.F.C., K.C.H.S. 1944 - 2018**

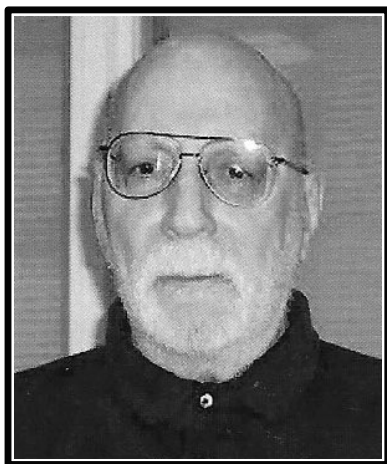


Brother James Austin Finnegan passed away on June 27, 2018, in New Rochelle, NY. Brother Finnegan was born on March 28, 1944, in New York City, New York the son of Paul and Ruth (Murray) Finnegan. He received a BA in Classical Language from Iona College and an MA in Student Personnel Services from Montclair State University.

Brother Finnegan entered the Congregation on July 01, 1962 and pronounced his final vows on June 27, 1969. His ministry took him to many positions, including Catholic Memorial in West Roxbury, MA; Essex Catholic in Newark, NJ; Iona Prep in New Rochelle, NY; Notre Dame-Bishop Gibbons in Schenectady, NY; and Trinity Catholic HS in Ocala, FL. He was also Associate Superintendent of Schools for the

Archdiocese of Newark, and worked for the Edmund Rice Institute in New Rochelle, NY.

## **Brother Anton Joseph Lips, CFC 1933 – 2018**



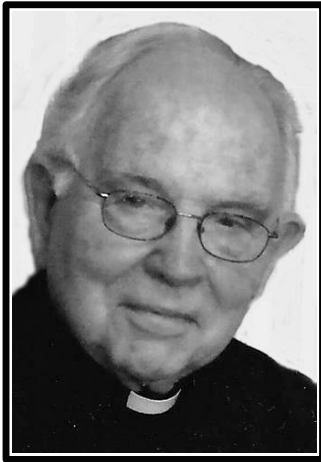
Brother Anton Joseph Lips passed away on June 29, 2018, in New Rochelle, NY. Brother Lips was born on June 27, 1933, in New York City, NY, the son of Anton and Mae (Donofrio) Lips. He received a BS in Math from Iona College, a MS in Education from Fordham University, and an MBA in Management Science from Iona College.

Brother Lips entered the Congregation of Christian Brothers on June 27, 1951 and pronounced his first vows on September 08, 1952. He made his final vows on June 27, 1959. His ministry took him to many schools including St. Cecilia's in New York City, Catholic Memorial in West Roxbury, MA; Regina HS in Corner Brook, NL; Bergen Catholic HS in Oradell, NJ; All Hallows HS in

the Bronx; Iona Prep and Iona College in New Rochelle, NY.

In June 2007 he moved to St. Joseph's Care Residence in New Rochelle, NY, and remained there until his death in January 2018.

## Brother Joseph Bertrand Darcy, CFC 1920 - 2018



Brother Joseph Bertrand Darcy passed away on October 16, 2018, in St. John's, Newfoundland. Brother Darcy was born on March 03, 1920, in St. John's, Newfoundland, the son of James Michael Darcy and Isabel (Kelly) Darcy. He graduated from Fordham University with a B.Sc. in Education in 1949. He continued at Fordham University earning an M.A. in philosophy in 1952. At St. John's University (New York City) he completed the courses for a Ph.D. in philosophy.

Brother Darcy entered the Congregation of Christian Brothers on October 15, 1936 and pronounced his first vows in 1937. His ministry took him to many positions including his first assignment to Iona School in 1939. He also ministered at St. Bonaventure's College in St. John's, Newfoundland, Rice High school in New York City, and Iona College in New Rochelle.

In 1960 he was elected to the leadership team of the Brothers headquartered in New Rochelle, NY. He was there until 1963 when he returned to Canada as the first province leader of the newly formed Canadian Province of the Christian Brothers. He remained in this position until the General Chapter of 1972 when he was elected to the General Council Team of the Christian Brothers headquartered in Rome. He served in Rome for 12 years as the Vicar-General (the number two man) of the Congregation.

Having completed his term of office in 1984, he moved to Belfast Northern Ireland and donated his time and talents at one of the Brothers' schools there teaching music.

In 1994 he returned to St. John's, Newfoundland, taking up residence at Mt. St. Francis, and remained there until his death in 2018.

