

Standing on
the Shoulders
of Giants.

BLESSED EDMUND



THANKFUL
BR TEDDY BEYER,
CFC



WELCOME
NEW PRESIDENT
JENNIFER ROSE

**SYNOD ON
SYNODALITY**
OCTOBER 4-29, 2023

CONSORTIUM CHRONICLE



STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

Cris Ritchie-Bonomo

When I think of Blessed Edmund, I am always struck by his optimism and dependence on providence. Like many saints, Edmund began with wealth, connections, and education. However, for Edmund, material gifts were a means. To him, money and connections were tools to be used for the benefit

“What thanksgiving should
we not give to God for
calling us into religion. May
He be blessed and praised
forever.”

Blessed Edmund to Mother Mary
Patrick Keeshan, Presentation
Convent, Waterford, 1836

of the community, for those in need. Most of us are familiar with Edmund's admonition to give to the poor in handfuls.

But, I am also struck by his words of gratitude said later in his life to Mother Mary Patrick Keeshan. In his statement of thanksgiving to God, he reveals his profound love for our creator, and he recognizes that all he has and is were not his accomplishments alone, but God's gifts, the work of the Holy Spirit, that brought key people into his life to support the work of educating young people. In 1836, when Edmund expressed his gratitude to God, for his "call to religion," he was aging, beginning to suffer from painful arthritis, and although his community continued to grow, he faced some tough challenges from some of his beloved brothers. In just two more years, Edmund would retire and become somewhat confined to his room. Yet, he remained hopeful, dependent on God, and grateful.

Like Edmund each one of us has faced our own challenges, griefs, as well as joys, abundance, and loss. But each year, we come back to our schools and our ministry. We choose to heed God's call to continue Edmund's vision for a better world. Although the way we teach and structure our schools has dramatically changed since Edmund's first school in a stable, we, continue to stay in touch with our core values, our love for God, families, students, faculty, staff and parents.

On behalf of all of us at the Office of Educational Services, I thank you for saying yes to serving in the Edmund Rice Consortium of Schools. Your presence, compassion and commitment to an education that liberates is authentic and inspiring. Please know, that all of us at 260 Wilmot pray for you each day, appreciate you, and desire to be of service to you and your school community.

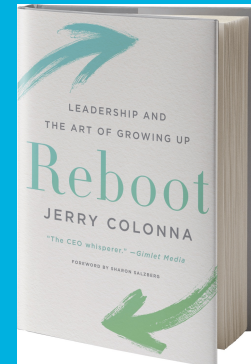
We wish you a year filled with God's goodness and light. Please remember though, when those moments of darkness come, that they will pass. You are not walking alone. Not only is Christ with you, we are together with the communion of saints, standing on the shoulders of Edmund and the giants who are the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers. Thank you, Blessed Edmund. Thank you all who serve children and families in our consortium community.

In This Issue

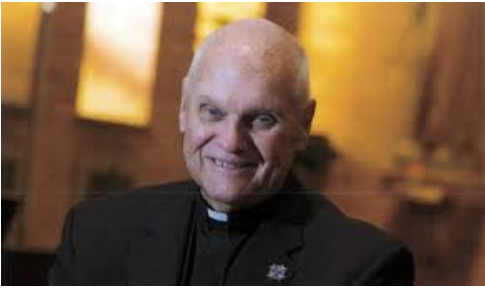
This month we have asked Br. Brian Walsh to remember Br Teddy Beyer, CFC, an Edmund Rice Giant.

We also have our typical feature Happenings in the Church and Society Impacting Schools and Education, From the Literature and Hats Off to . . . We hope you enjoy the first issue of this year!

One Recommendation from Cris's Summer Professional Reading



Jerry Colonna's book *Reboot: Leadership and the Art of Growing Up* is a fascinating look at the deeply personal aspects of leadership. Who we are has a profound impact on the type of community we build in our organizations. The writing is spiritual and filled with stories. Great Read! Here's a quote: *"Work—our careers, our professions, our jobs,—is neither the blissful expression of deep purpose. Nor the dreadful obligation that stands in the way of being ourselves. Work is the opportunity for the daily realignment of the inner and outer (values), a daily do over of life expressed with integrity."* Page 160



Brother Brian Walsh, CFC

Brother Teddy Beyer, CFC

Thankful for You!

Br. Brian Walsh

Brother Teddy Beyer joined the Bergen Catholic faculty during the 1969-1970 academic year, and taught his last two social studies and religion class at Bergen Catholic during the 2008-2009 academic year; forty years later at age 85. This story about Brother Beyer speaks to our gratitude and appreciation for each one of you.

When Teddy died in 2017 at the age of ninety-three we found a 1988 quote from the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education glued to his door. Brother Teddy read the quote every time he left his room to go into the school. While it says many things, it says ***“prime responsibility for creating the unique Christian school climate rests with the administrators, teachers, staff as individuals and as community.”*** While the quote states many more nice things, it is a shot in the arm.

On the page eleven we have included the full quote for you to hang on your door or wherever you wish. A few times in the past, I have given those words to leaders, faculty, and staff to reflect on the ninety words and given them the opportunity to write a prayer. Then I would use the prayers, which were anonymous, to start and end each faculty meeting. Perhaps each school leader could share one with us and we could begin our Consortium Chronicle with your prayer!

First though, let me share this prayer, written by a teacher who participated in this exercise.

Dear God,

Thank you for the opportunity to work with our students in helping them to be respectful, responsible, and community-minded individuals. Please help us (teachers) to remember our responsibility to act as role models, as we interact with colleagues. As we work toward molding our student's spiritual life, may we remember how it is equally filling our spirit. Amen

Doesn't that make you weak in the knees? This is what we are about.

Happenings in the Church and Society Impacting Schools. Br. Brian Walsh

The Essential Elements of an Edmund. Rice Christian Brother Education.

1. Evangelize Youth within the Mission of the Church
2. Proclaim and Witness to Catholic Identity.

Church

Updating: Last year we mentioned that the Church throughout its history has had meetings of leaders called SYNODS to answer questions, set directions, and provide guidelines for action. cont. on page 4

Happenings in the Church and Society Impacting Schools cont.

Since the Vatican Council in 1965 there has been a synod (a meeting of Bishops) every three years on a topic decided by the Bishops at a previous Synod. The next Synod (the world originally meant walking together) is in two sessions and first session is:

The Synod on Synodality October 4-29, 2023

The second session is October 2024.

Has had a three year preparation period involving conversations on the parish, diocesan, national, and international levels;

First Synod. (And only the second since the Middle Ages not to have a set topic.

It is the first Synod where there are participants other than Bishops.

70 Lay participants; half are women and there are youth representatives.

A key scripture passage that surfaced in many discussion groups around the world and is in the document summarizing the discussions was:

IS 54:12

*Enlarge the space in your tent
Spread out your tent clothes unsparingly
Lengthen your robes and make
Firm your pegs.*

This is how many reports envision the Church: an expansive but not homogeneous dwelling, capable of sheltering all, but open, letting in and out (John 10:9) and moving toward embracing the father and all of humanity.



Enlarge the tent for the: those vulnerable by their lack of social or economic power, immigrant communities, ethnic minorities, the unborn and their mothers, disabled people, women, those marginalized by situations: divorce, remarriage

Without annulment, LGBTQ+ Another topic receiving much discussion is Clericalism in the Church.

Not all are pleased with the “expand the space of your tent” approach.:

Archbishop. Charles J. Chaput, Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia:

“The only worth agenda of the Synod is the one given by Jesus in the Gospels. Church gatherings should be about proclaiming the Gospel and not about advancing a particular ideology or sociological analysis.”

(Catholic News Agency: February, 20, 2023)

Bishop Thomas Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois suggests that Cardinal McElroy is a heretic because the Cardinal thinks the Church should minister to LGBTQ+ people and Catholics who have been divorced and remarried.

(First Times Magazine: February 28, 2023)

Father Gerald E. Murray

The situation of the Catholic Church at present is one of grave disorder in large part to the willingness of Pope Francis to say, do, and tolerate things that no pope in history has ever done or tolerated.

(The Catholic Thing: February 18, 2023)

Happenings in the Church and Society Impacting Schools cont.

Society

1. While the focus on book banning, sex education,

There are fourteen states that have Parental Rights Statutes. While the movement (from media coverage) seems to be about book banning, gender identity and behavior and critical race theory.

2. The Tampa Bay Times has been doing a series of articles on life (education) in public schools.

In March it reported on a Middle School in Pinellas county (best known cities might be St. Petersburg and Clearwater.) The school reported on is neither the best or the worst of the five middle schools in the county.

The school has seven hundred and seventy students:

Between August and February there were forty two police reports of “brawling” or “battery.

- The number of tardies in October: 3, 966
- The number of tardies in February: 2,605.

In 2021-2022 there were seventy-eight reported incidents: Twenty-one physical attacks, seventeen disruptions on campus, fifteen fights.

- students were described shoving school employees
- threatening violence if a teacher did not let them leave the classroom.

The Principal and the Transformation Schools Chief told a parent who was concerned because her son

- had a basketball thrown at his head;
- after talking to a girl, the girl’s boyfriend got jealous, picked him up and dropped him on his head.

“Most of the trouble does from the student’s age. They’re learning to be communicators and sometimes they communicate poorly.

- The new principal has asked students what would motivate them. Some student responses:
- Dress-down days
- School dances
- Grade eight students want to be able to walk to lunch without being accompanied by adults.

3. Early Puberty

“Precocious” puberty first gained widespread clinical attention in the 1990s. It is defined as the appearance of secondary sex characteristics in girls eight or younger and boys nine or younger.

Vast increase during the pandemic

No conclusive answers as to the cause but factors involved: stress and trauma, lifestyle habits: poor diet, lack of exercise, impaired sleep, excess screen time.

Researchers believe the changes in life style during the pandemic may become the new norm.

- Two or threefold increases in the numbers since March 2020.
- May pose risk years later, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, certain cancers of the reproductive system.

(Time Magazine September 4, 2023)



Happenings in the Church and Society Impacting Schools cont.



From the Literature

1. ADHD is a common neurodevelopment disorder that typically begins in childhood and effects more than six million U.S. children. Symptoms include difficulty staying focused and controlling behavior and very high levels of activity.

The FDA has approved EndeavorRX by Akili for ages eight to twelve as video game therapy for ADHD. The company is close to applying for use for thirteen to seventy year old. It is available by prescription from specialty pharmacies.

2. From Harpers Index

- Number of hours by which the amount of work per month to afford the typical U.S. rent has risen in the past two years: 8.
- Percentage of workers who have looked for a second job because of inflation: 38
- Number who plan to do so: 14
- Percentage increase since 2019 in Google searches for plausible reasons to skip work: 824.
- Portion of U.S. eighth graders who are proficient or above in Math: 26
- Percentage by which that represents a decrease since 2019; 24

News From Around the Consortium



Welcome Jennifer Rose to the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers Consortium of Schools. Jennifer is the new President of Guadalupe Regional School in Brownsville Texas. After serving at ICA Cristo Rey School in San Francisco, Jennifer has returned home to Brownsville where she began her career

We hope you will give her a warm welcome when you meet at our upcoming retreat!

KUDOS!



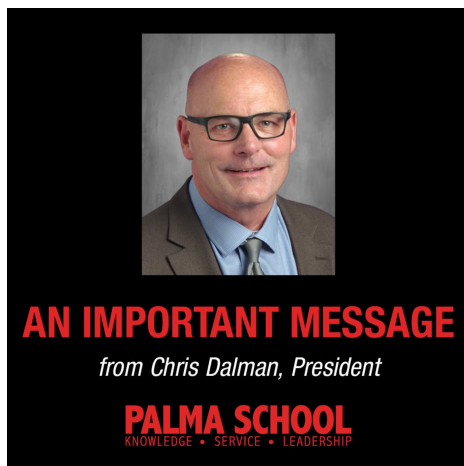
ACTION Leadership Team Presents at Westchester Green County USA's World

The Iona Preparatory ACTION Leadership team joined with like-minded schools, lobbyists and elected officials from across the tristate area on June 5 for a World Environment Day celebration with the members of Westchester Green County USA. Fittingly ironic, the skies turned a hazy orange just several days later as wildfire smoke from Canada made its way across the Northeast, making New York's (cont. on page 7)

News From

Around the Consortium (cont from page 6)

air quality among the worst in the world for among the worst in the world for a brief period of time. While the skies have since cleared, nothing could be clearer than the group's overall goal of an unprecedented level of cooperation. July 20, 2023



High School Co-Ed in 2024-25

After several years of careful deliberation within our community, I am proud to announce that Palma School will accept young women, grades 9-12, beginning with the 2024/2025 school year.

For a number of months, Palma's leadership engaged with the Diocese of Monterey to investigate the possibility of establishing a co-educational high school in the Salinas Valley. After a study conducted during the Fall/Winter 2021/2022 by Catholic School Management, Bishop Daniel Garcia and then-Provincial Leader of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, Brother Kevin Griffith, released a joint statement that concluded: "The families and children in the northern part of the Diocese of Monterey could be better served by a co-educational high school structure in Salinas. Since the release of that statement, Palma School and Diocesan leadership teams have actively explored a path to bring this

vision into reality. Unfortunately, circumstances at this time prevent the Diocese and Palma from forming a co-educational high school. With a resolve to serve all of our local young people, while following the direction of this study and the wishes of our community, we are excited to come full circle back to Palma School's founding co-educational roots.



Edmund Rice Medallion Unveiled At Bergen Catholic

ORADELL, NJ, September 8, 2023 – Bergen Catholic High School has a brand-new piece of artwork that will captivate the Crusader community for generations to come. The work of art is entitled, Edmund Rice Medallion, and is located inside the main office entrance to the school, and was created by Bergen Catholic art teacher Nedko Bucev, with assistance from his BC AP art students as well.

The medallion is made of brushed gold Aluminum Composite Material (ACM), the same material used on the current facades of the Manhattan skyscrapers.

Cont. on page 8

News From

Around the Consortium (cont from page 7)

It was cut with a water laser following a computer-generated line. The background is also ACM fabricated and colored with Bergen Catholic's scarlet & red colors. The three crosses on the top and bottom of the backdrop, in addition to their air ducting function, represent two arrows pointing to Blessed Edmund Rice. One from the sky, meant to symbolize following Blessed Edmund Rice's example through our Christian faith, and the lower arrows symbolizing the Earth, and our following Blessed Edmund Rice in our everyday life.

"It is important to mention that this medallion celebrates Edmund Rice and his example of how students pray his name every morning," said Nedko Bucev. "It should be seen as a visual prayer. For this reason, the medallion vision is ethereal and delicate."

"The Edmund Rice Medallion shares with our school community the values of the life of Blessed Edmund Rice, the gifts that he's given to us, and the teachings he has instilled in us. It's an inspiration for all of us to see this medallion and remember what Blessed Edmund Rice has given, as we share our gifts with others," said Bergen Catholic President Dr. Brian Mahoney.

O'Dea Junior, Lorenzo Neri Experiences World Youth Day

This past summer, I joined a group of Youth, Young Adults, Seminarians, Staff, Deacon and Priest even Bishop of the Archdiocese of Seattle to attend the World Youth Day (WYD) at Lisbon, Portugal. It was my first time attending WYD and didn't know what to expect, who and how I would be spending my week of pilgrimage.

Before attending World Youth Day, I thought I was attending a praying event. Well, World Youth Day was not only a gathering event but unity in diversity with shared faith and journey. My participation in World Youth Day renewed my purpose.



Junior Lorenzo Neri joined the Archdiocese group that attended World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.

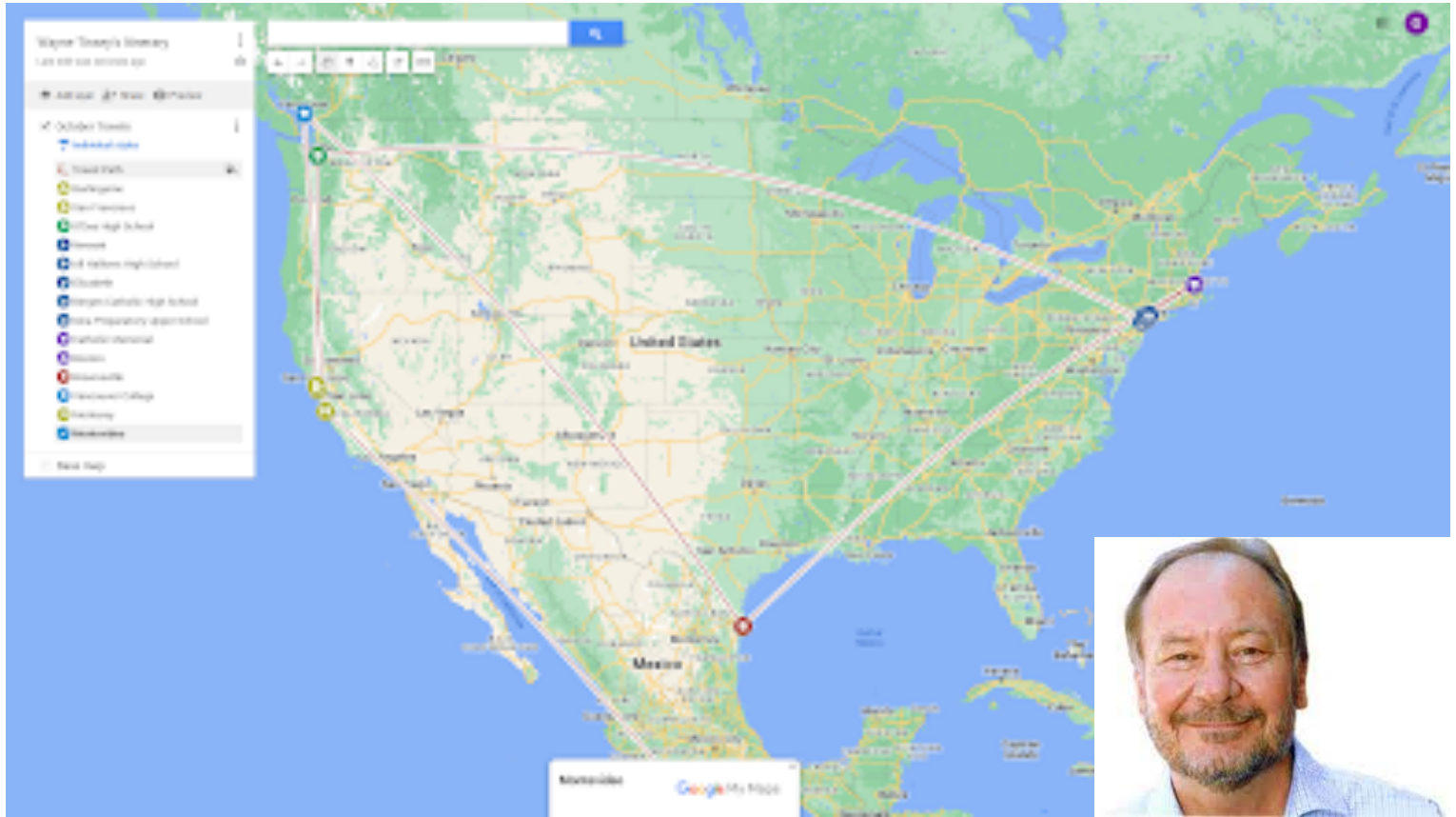
After hearing Pope Francis speak to Pilgrims on welcoming ceremony and closing mass, it helped me view the purpose of my faith and how it would guide me on my own journey in life. WYD was an amazing trip to remember; lots of different special memories – from visiting different local and historic churches to getting to know our group members during our daily walks and special bond we built in this pilgrimage felt very special. But my best memory of World Youth Day was when I was 5 feet away from Pope Francis while he was waving to Pilgrims from his Pope mobile.

I pray that other youth get a chance to experience World Youth Day once in their lifetime. It's not only a gathering event but an opportunity to reflect and renew one's faith. I am very grateful for all the prayers, support, and generosity of our community especially to Immaculate Conception Church Seattle for introducing World Youth Day to me and my family that I was able to attend and experience this wonderful event. Special thank you to Archdiocese of Seattle for leading the group for this amazing and memorable Pilgrimage and renewal of faith.

God Bless,

Lorenzo Neri '24

Immaculate Conception Church – Altar Server



THE TIRELESS EREBB AMBASSADOR: WAYNE TINSEY TOURS NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCE

BY CRIS BONOMO MAP DESIGN: GABRIEL GUARENTE

Caution: One look at this map may lead to fatigue! But fatigue doesn't seem to be in the vocabulary of the Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders Ambassador, Wayne Tinsey. We are grateful and looking forward to welcoming Mr. Tinsey to the North American province as he treks his way across the continent to visit many of our schools.

Wayne will begin his trip by joining the School Leaders Retreat in San Francisco. Next he will visit Seattle and Vancouver and then make his way to Kearney, New Jersey and join us for the ACTION Student Leadership Workshop. He then makes his way to the schools in the northeast, down to Brownsville and back to California with a visit at Palma. Mr Tinsey will spend twenty-eight days in North America.

While here, Wayne's mission is to connect us all as one global community begun by Blessed Edmund Rice. Although Edmund began his work with uneducated boys in Waterford, his vision and charism now live in the two hundred and fifty schools stretching across the globe. Each school has its unique character but we share one common ancestor, Edmund Rice and his legacy, and his desire to build God's kingdom here and now continues to be our mission,

We are grateful to Wayne, EREBB, and the various Brother's residences across the province for making Mr Tinsey's visit to our schools possible. We at OES know you will be inspired by Wayne's message of hope and faith.

School Leaders' Retreat

October 2-5, 2023

By Cris Bonomo



We are grateful to Steve Garland and the team at Saint Thomas More for their vision and generosity. As part of the extended portion of our retreat, we are pleased to welcome Cormac McArt, (top photo) Director of the Westcourt Centre in Belfast, Ireland. In addition to directing the Westcourt Centre, which supports the most vulnerable in the city of Belfast. In addition to his tireless work in his home city, he is deeply involved with Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders and Edmund Rice International. His Advocacy work will be featured at our upcoming ACTION Student Leadership Workshop.

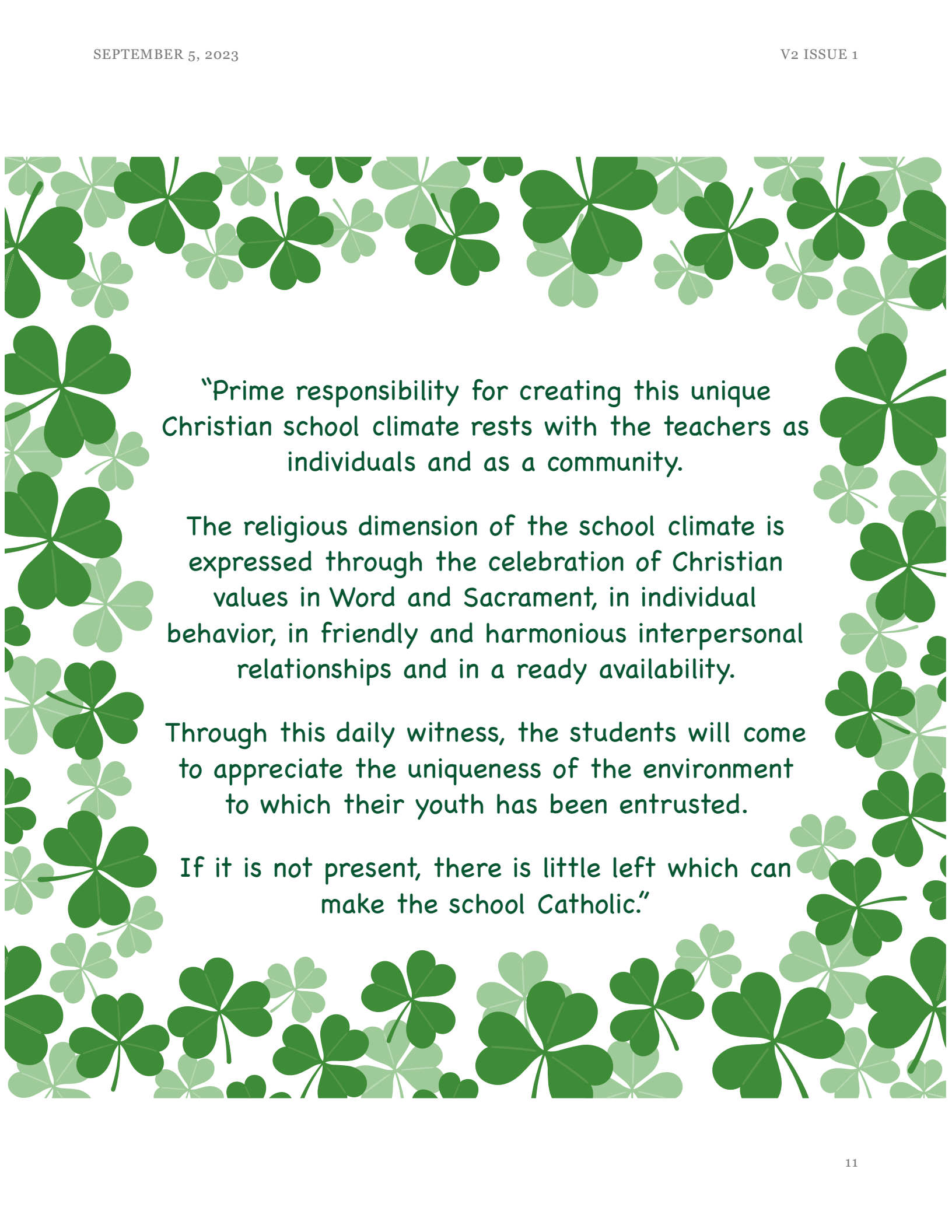
While at the retreat we are fortunate to welcome Aidan Donaldson and Brother Denis Gleeson, CFC, the two writers of the book you will, hopefully soon receive, *Beauty Through Broken Windows: Empowering Edmund Rice's Vision Today*. Aidan is in the second photo and Br. Denis in the third.

We are also grateful, through the gift of Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders, to welcome Mr. Wayne Tinsey. He will join us at the retreat and offer his insights, experience, and wisdom.

For our last two days of the retreat, I am so proud to share one of my dearest friends, and my mentor, Sr. Catherine Powers, CND. Sister Catherine, who prefers to be called Sr. Kay Bronx, and is a graduate of Saint Jean Baptiste High School in Manhattan, which was founded by the Congregation of Notre Dame community. She has a degree from Fordham University and Temple. While teaching she finished her Bachelors degree at Fordham University and while serving as a principal she earned her Masters from Temple. After serving as a principal in the Archdiocese of Chicago, she became the Director of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, where she mentored many new principals including me! Most importantly she strengthened the community of schools within the Archdiocese and built a bridge between parish religious education and schools. . As the Director of Catholic Education she was not only the Superintendent she supervised the Director of Religious Education, Director of Adult Faith Formation and the Pastoral Center Library. I know you will find her to be a woman of deep faith, strength, and character. She is practical, and has a terrific sense of humor!



If you have anything you would like to share in the October CC, Please email me: crb@ercbna.education

A decorative border of green shamrocks of various sizes and shades of green, arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern around the text.

“Prime responsibility for creating this unique Christian school climate rests with the teachers as individuals and as a community.

The religious dimension of the school climate is expressed through the celebration of Christian values in Word and Sacrament, in individual behavior, in friendly and harmonious interpersonal relationships and in a ready availability.

Through this daily witness, the students will come to appreciate the uniqueness of the environment to which their youth has been entrusted.

If it is not present, there is little left which can make the school Catholic.”