



PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America

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Christian Brothers Community Jackson, Mississippi, Renew Their Vows



**Br. Dan
Lauber**

As the dogwoods and magnolias blossom with the onset of spring here in the South, the Church celebrates the Resurrection of the Lord. As we celebrate the new life we are called to, the Brothers celebrate the Life of Blessed Edmund Rice with the renewal of their Vows.

At a Mass presided over by Bishop William Houck (Bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Jackson), Brothers Ted Dausch, John Brennan, Daniel Lauber and Lucian Knaap renewed their Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience before the faculty and student body of St. Joseph Catholic School in Jackson,

Mississippi. The readings and homily stressed the concept of commitment to a life dedicated to the Lord and to the service of others. Blessed Edmund Rice as husband, parent, entrepreneur, religious, teacher and founder was highlighted, a man in whom people in many vocations can find inspiration. The Lord's call to Blessed Edmund to educate and to serve the poor and those marginalized by society is a call that we must all respond to. As Blessed Edmund said, *"Were we to know the merit and value of only going from one street to another to serve a neighbor for the love of God, we should prize it more than gold or silver."*

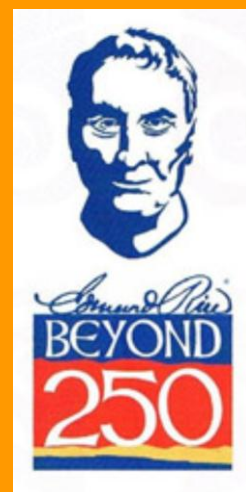
As we reflect on our lives as Christian Brothers, we recall that it was Bishop Houck who invited the Brothers to serve in the Diocese of Jackson, fifteen years ago. As Brothers, our religious formation, professional training and educational experience have allowed us to contribute in a significant way to our ministries. At present, Ted is the Director of Hispanic Ministry for the Diocese. His work takes him throughout the parishes of the Diocese, as he tends to the spiritual needs of the Hispanic Community. John teaches U.S. Government and Religion at St. Joseph Catholic School. In addition, he is engaged in outreach to poor families in South Jackson. Dan serves as counselor and as a member of the administrative team at St. Joseph Catholic School. He also works with the choir at St. Mary's Church in Jackson. Lucian



(l to r): Brothers Lucian Knaap, John Brennan, Ted Dausch and Dan Lauber renew their vows.

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What is it in the life of Blessed Edmund and what he stood for in his time that is still relevant in today's Church and in today's world? For many years, we concentrated on Edmund as Religious Founder and Educator. In more recent times, many have also drawn strength and meaning from Edmund as parent of a handicapped daughter and as a widower. Others again saw him as an honest and caring businessman in a corrupt world. The list goes on...



www.ercbna.org

Compassion and liberation
in the spirit of
Jesus and Edmund

teaches Religion and is the Director of Religious Education at St. Anthony Catholic School. Lucian also organizes the children's church program on Sundays at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Madison. Each of our lives has been enriched and we have learned much from those to whom and with whom we minister.

As the Brothers continue to serve the people of the Diocese of Jackson, we join our prayers with all in the Edmund Rice network as we strive to proclaim with our lives the joy and hope of the Lord's Resurrection. We pray for Blessed Edmund Rice's intercession as we reach out to others as the hands and feet, the eyes and ears of the Lord.

Brother Dan Lauber is a high school guidance counselor at St. Joseph's School in Jackson, Mississippi. Read more about St. Joe's at www.stjoebruins.com

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES New Rochelle, New York

School Leaders Meeting 2012



**Sr. Grace
D'Amico**

Forty school leaders, including presidents, principals, and board chairs, attended the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America School Consortium Annual Meeting at Bergen Catholic High School, Oradell, New Jersey, March 27 - 29, 2012. Every school in the consortium was represented, and, for the first time, the Director of Colegio Cardenal Newman, Buenos Aires, Argentina, also attended. Five members of the Provincial Leadership Team also joined the group.

During the opening prayer on the Paschal Mystery, Brother Hugh O'Neill, Provincial Leader, offered a reflection that prepared the group to engage in their important work. The agenda provided for spiritual inspiration, fresh ideas, best practices, discussion of critical issues, decision-making, and news ideas for governance. The school leaders chose a more equitable formula to fund the Office of Evangelization/Office of Educational Services (OE/OES) beginning in 2014. There were also opportunities for prayer and sharing of faith, networking, and socializing.

In his presentation, "Vision into Action: Edmund Rice Educator," Br. Vercruysse described how Edmund Rice Christian Brothers (ERCB) Schools, through their embrace of the *Essential Elements of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother Education*, clearly reflect Edmund's educational legacy. He set the tone for the meeting by directing the participants toward the future. "As we [Christian Brothers] become fewer," he said, "we need to take the necessary steps to insure a future that is promising and sustainable well into the next generation of families and students that will want our brand of education."

Mr. Michael Haviland, of DoGood Marketing, engaged the group in a session to create "the Edmund Rice School Brand," a "brand" that would set each ERCB school apart from its competition. Each table group drafted positioning statements indicating a target audience, frame of reference, benefit or point of difference, and a reason that only an Edmund Rice school could deliver that benefit.

The current and potential impact of the Christian Brothers Institute / Christian Brothers of Ireland Chapter 11 filing on the schools has caused enormous concern to the school leaders. Giving his report, Brother Kevin Griffith said that he intended to be open, honest, and transparent in sharing information while taking into account the legal constraints and issues of confidentiality. He also spoke of the reorganization as "a graced time" and opportunity for the Brothers to enter into the Paschal Mystery, which "teaches us that new life comes about in the process of letting go and dying to the old, so that the new can take root and transform our lives."

Brother Griffith then presented detailed information regarding the steps taken so far, the current situation, and the uncertainty of the future. He concluded by thanking the school leaders for their sacrifices and their

continued support. “Let us commit to working with one another and let us recall the words of Blessed Edmund, who once said, ‘Let us be intent on prayer, and all will turn to our good.’” Both Brother Griffith and Brother O’Neill answered questions, and ensured the leaders that they and the congregation value the schools highly and intend to support them in the future.

Mr. Tom Ondrla, President of St. Laurence High School, on behalf of the finance committee, presented background on current funding of the OE/ OES and recommended two options for more equitable funding in the future, whereby all the schools in the consortium would share the costs. The participants discussed the issue and Mr. Ondrla and Sr. Ona Bessette, CND, Director of the OES, answered questions. After caucusing with participants from their schools, the school leaders selected the option that included a flat per school fee plus a per student fee, but some expressed concern for schools with less ability to pay. The new funding formula will be implemented in 2014, and may be phased in to reduce strain on school budgets. A committee will be formed to establish a fund to assist schools in meeting their financial obligation.

Several sessions were devoted to governance issues and strengthening the consortium. Sister Grace D’Amico, SSND, Associate Director of OES, and Brother Dan Casey presented on the various relationships among each school, the ERCB Province, and their respective diocese. They both emphasized that because schools are ministries of the Catholic Church, the religious congregation and the diocese are charged with safeguarding the mission and the patrimony of the Church. This responsibility is exercised through canonical (public juridical person) and civil (corporation) structures, such as two-tiered boards and reserved powers, and services offered by congregational education offices like the OES.

Moving from the present to the future, Brother Vercruysse spoke about new trends for Catholic schools currently governed by a religious congregation. One model would transfer canonical governance authority and responsibility from the congregation to a new Church entity, i.e., public juridical person, which would govern the schools as Catholic schools in the community’s tradition. Such a transfer could take years because of the canonical and civil processes involved, but it is not too early to consider the possibility of such a move. Total reliance on persons who are not vowed religious to govern the schools in the future makes future formation in Catholic identity, spiritual leadership, and the community’s charism, as well as a strong school network, all the more urgent.



(left to right): Maureen Kiers, Principal of Iona Prep; Br. Dan Casey, PLT; Franco Trasolini, Chair of the Board of Vancouver College; and Julie Locey, Principal of Bishop Kearney High School

Interspersed between presentations were roundtable sessions on topics of interest, e.g., advancement, classroom technology, enrollment, and campus ministry. Divisional meetings for presidents, principals, and board chairs were also conducted.

After all the business had been concluded, the school leaders gathered in the Bergen Catholic chapel for a blessing and commissioning ceremony. During the prayer service, Brother O’Neill presented the leaders from each school with a framed picture and prayer to Blessed Edmund, saying, “I commission you to carry the Gospel message with you as you serve the people of God.”

Participants were most grateful for the outstanding hospitality offered by Bergen Catholic High School, culminating in a private Thursday evening Statue of Liberty dinner cruise when they joined Bergen Catholic President Brother Brian Walsh and Bergen Catholic invited guests to enjoy a delicious meal and the spectacular New York skyline.

In their written evaluations, school leaders expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the meeting, citing both the well-prepared presentations and candor when dealing with delicate issues. One noted, "Tough issues were addressed. Great conversation and give and take. It was more transparent than ever before." Another found the "future potential of the consortium / network" most helpful, and added "A vision of a positive future in the midst of ambiguity was inspiring." Participants also offered suggestions for future meetings, which will be carefully considered. Several committees will be formed to further the work in the areas of ERCB school brand, OES funding, and governance.

The meeting was planned by Brother Tom Murphy, Director of Evangelization; Sister Ona, and Sister Grace, with the help of a school leader planning committee and Mr. Robert Shea of Shea Consulting Services, who facilitated the meeting.

JERICHO HOUSE Wainfleet, Ontario



**Sr. Jacquie
Keefe**

During Easter, Jericho House hosted a gathering of friends to celebrate the feast. Attending were the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, the Presentation Brothers and Friends of Jericho House. They celebrated the joy and exultation of Easter. Turkey, ham and all the trimmings were enjoyed by all as we shared story and the joy of the Season.

Brother Francis, Provincial of the Presentation Brothers expressed the feelings of all who attended when he wrote: "A belated thank you for the wonderful Easter dinner we shared with you. I truly enjoyed my time with you and thank you for the invitation and wonderful meal. I could think of no better way of spending Easter. It was great to meet so many Christian Brothers and others. The Center was the perfect setting for an Easter gathering. How proud you must be of all your hard work in getting the Center established. So many will be blessed by it. Please know that you will be kept in prayer. Continue to keep us in yours from time to time. I look forward to seeing you both at the Center and with us here in Toronto. This afternoon we will be moving to our residence downtown. It will be nice to get settled and unpack all my bags.

With sincerest thanks and deepest appreciation, and blessings and prayers."

Read more about Jericho House at www.jerichohouse.org



Table Conversation



Seated is Br. Bill Colford, in the center, with Presentation Brothers Henry on the right and Francis on the left. Br. Bill Carrothers is standing in the back.

BROTHER RICE HIGH SCHOOL

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

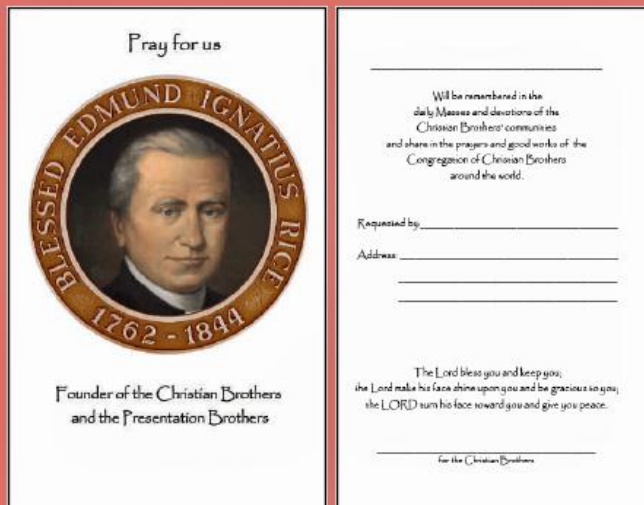


**Br. Ross
Wielatz**

Brother Ross Wielatz and former Brother Malcolm (Robert '51) Morrison will be inducted into the Brother Rice High School Hall of Fame in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, on Thursday, May 3, 2012, when the school conducts its annual Founder's Day Celebration. Brother Wielatz recently returned to Brother Rice where he does counseling for families facing drug and alcohol problems. He taught math at Brother Rice from 1964-76 and was much involved with the years of the school's burgeoning athletic program when he served as the first baseball coach of the Warrior 9. He later was the community superior from 1970 - 1976.

Malcolm Morrison, who died in 1999, was the 4th principal of the school from 1971 - 1977 and was very much responsible for the school's development as an academic powerhouse for the Northwestern suburbs of Detroit. As many Brothers have said, "Bob Morrison put Brother Rice on the map!" Bob will be inducted posthumously.

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer Cards



Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer Cards are a beautiful way to assure loved ones of your prayerful support. Our Prayer Card is a singular expression in honor of some special occasion or at a sorrowful time for a bereaved relative or friend.

The benefactor's donation (payable to the Christian Brothers Foundation) benefits the ministries of the Christian Brothers.

If you would like a set of Prayer Cards, please contact:

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Christian Brothers Foundation
33 Pryer Terrace
New Rochelle, NY 10804

alb@cbinstitute.org



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IONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL

New Rochelle, New York

Iona Prep takes on Mission Peru. Edmund Rice would be proud!



**Br. Willie
Harris**

Over midwinter break, a number of Iona Prep students and faculty traveled to Lima, Peru to participate in a mission trip. The group of 19 representatives visited "Canto Grande" which is one of the poorer barrios where water, sanitary facilities, and other utilities are not hooked up. This is the location of Fe y Alegria 26. The group helped construct a new house for a destitute family and participated in the work done by two local families to help them earn a subsistence living. Elsewhere, the group worked in an orphanage and helped out at a Franciscan community center.

The group spent the last three days of the trip in the historic Machu Picchu. The trip was chaperoned by Brother Leto, Dr. Kelton, Mr. Daly and Ms. Pfaff. Brother Stephen

Casey helped organize the trip.

In preparation for trip, Iona Prep hosted "Mission Peru Week." During that week, the representatives coordinated events and activities such as a dress-down day, ice cream sundaes, and the sale of Peru t-shirts. In addition, medical supplies and children's games to be distributed in Peru were collected. As a result of Mission Peru Week, the Iona Prep community raised well over \$9,000 for the mission trip, surpassing the goal of \$7,500.

During the trip, the group recorded their experiences in a detailed blog at missionperu.tumblr.com.



Cardinal Dolan Visits Iona Preparatory School



Cardinal Dolan with school president, Br. Tom Leto, on the left; and Mrs. Maureen Kiers, school principal, on the right.

On Monday, March 5, 2012, Iona Preparatory School welcomed Cardinal Timothy Dolan (New York Archdiocese) to celebrate Mass and visit with the Iona Prep community. This marked the first Mass the Cardinal celebrated with a school community since his elevation as Cardinal. Cardinal Dolan celebrated a Lenten Mass at 10:30 a.m. with a number of local pastors and priests in the newly renovated Tully Gymnasium.

During his homily, the Cardinal was enthusiastic in his praise of contributions made to the archdiocese by Iona Prep and the Christian Brothers. Afterwards, Cardinal Dolan took a tour of the campus grounds with Iona Prep administrators, faculty, staff and students. He also enjoyed a small lunch with a number of Iona

Prep students.

The Cardinal's visit is the result of the urging of Joseph Noschese, '12, who asked the Cardinal to visit the Prep in the fall.



VANCOUVER COLLEGE

Vancouver, British Columbia

FAITH IN ACTION

One of the essential elements of Catholic education at Vancouver College (VC) is to stand in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and injustice. With this mission in mind, the student outreach program was organized to place faith in action and make it a reality in our school community.

A group of 12 students and four staff took a trip to New Orleans and volunteered at Camp Restore for a week during Spring Break 2012. The group worked very well together and the students served as great ambassadors of Vancouver College through their strong work ethic, friendly behaviour, and amazing desire to serve others. The T.E.A.M. included: Enzo Nardi, Fr. Chris Lynch, Mrs. Mer Marghetti, Mrs. Lilian Vernier, Mr. Darren Yanko, David Aquino, Nicolas Armstrong, Matt Ellis, Ericson Herbosa, Spencer Ho, James Infante, Alvin Leung, Nicolas Pakula, Colin Paterson, Jason Pinto, Patrick Toyota, and William Zylamans. Their worksites included the St. John Berchmans Center, a former orphanage operated by the Sisters of the Holy Family that is being rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina as a convent and child development center.

The Religious Education Department requires students at all grade levels to accomplish a "service project" as part of their completion of the course each year. In this way, students are challenged from the start to "get involved" in the world both near and far and "make a difference" for others. We hope in some small way to challenge the prevailing ethos of materialism and selfishness encouraged by business and political life today.

In addition, several school-wide initiatives take place each year to raise funds and encourage awareness that assists a number of local and international charities and organizations, including Covenant House, Sisters of the Atonement, and Doors Open.

Since 2006, The One World, One Heart Human Rights Conference takes place in April at Little Flower Academy (LFA) or Vancouver College. With many Catholic schools around Greater Vancouver participating, organizers from VC and LFA are always working hard in planning and organizing the conference. A student-led team works from October to April in planning this massive event, inviting speakers from across the political and social spectrum to challenge young people to get involved in changing the world. We are proud to say that this event has steadily been climbing in numbers and now attracts over two hundred participants!

Check out VC's experience in New Orleans at:

http://camprestore.org/index.php/stories/news-story/spring_break_2012/

Check out Vancouver College at www.vc.bc.ca



ALL HALLOWS HIGH SCHOOL

Bronx, New York

Below is a talk given by Keifer Peralta, a senior at All Hallows High School. He was chosen to represent all of the seniors in the Archdiocese of New York at a Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on April 25, 2012. Cardinal Dolan congratulated Keifer and asked for a copy of his talk.



Keifer Peralta

Your Eminence and members of the Class of 2012:

"Pro Fide Et Patria," which your Eminence knows means "For Faith and Country," has been the motto of All Hallows since its founding 103 years ago. This phrase is currently instilled in the more than 660 young men. An All Hallows graduate, as well as all of the graduates of the Catholic high schools represented here this morning, must proclaim and be witness to our Catholic identity; to stand in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and injustice; to pursue excellence in all our endeavors; and as men and women of God, demonstrate leadership skills. Indeed All Hallows is just one of many schools here today that witness to the excellence of a Catholic education. That tradition can be seen in its fullness in this cathedral. I am personally a proud member of the one hundredth graduating class of All Hallows High School.

We are all here representing our respective schools. Yet we are bound in the same cause as graduating seniors, taking the next steps in our lives. We are about to embark on a new journey that is sure to be filled with its hurdles. We

all know the world that awaits us. We live in a time when fear is prevalent and morals and values no longer hold the higher ground. These next steps in our lives won't be easy but it is with great joy that I say to you all as brothers and sisters in Christ, that we seniors are well prepared to face what is beyond these doors.

With the upmost confidence I say that our Catholic education has prepared us for the future. Our education in love and faithfulness in Christ rivals no other. The value of what we have learned over the last four years is incomparable. Our Catholic education is similar to the "Valuable Pearl" mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew. What price tag can be put on an education that teaches us to embrace the poor and the sick, to feed the hungry, and to stand up for the defenseless?

In our class rooms we are taught to love and to be virtuous. We are taught to treat others with dignity and to respect all human beings. A teacher may be able to teach us how to add and multiply but only Christ can teach us how to love. These essential elements that we have been taught are what allows me to say with confidence that we are prepared to be the next leaders of our future. These elements are what makes our education unlike any other. This solid, concrete foundation is what will sustain us as we go along the journey.

For more than 200 years our Archdiocese has stood firm as a beacon of light to all of us in the role that she has played in our education and that of countless others. For that we owe a debt of gratitude. We also must not forget those who have accompanied us along our four-year journey. Our education would not be possible without the loving support of our parents, principals, teachers, and of course you - Your Eminence.

Your Eminence, it is my honor on behalf of every graduating high school senior in the Class of 2012 to express to you our sincerest "thank you." We thank you for being the guardian of our faith and education here in New York.

Might I even add that this graduating class and you, Your Eminence, share a special relationship. Four years ago in the month of September, we enrolled as new freshmen. A few months later in April you were installed

as the new Archbishop of New York. Together we began a new phase in our lives.

Four years have passed and we are now graduating seniors, and you a newly created Prince of the Church. We are your first four-year graduating class and that my brothers and sisters is an honor. As we depart today humbly in service of our Lord, let's call to mind that we are called to serve Christ in everything we do. Our futures may be bright but remain uncertain, but hold confidence in the fact that Christ will always be there. I leave you with a quote from Blessed Pope John Paul II, "Do not be afraid. Do not be satisfied with mediocrity. Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Thank you, and may God bless the Class of 2012.

Keeifer also spoke in the All Hallows gym to the entire student body as they celebrated the feast of Edmund Rice and the conclusion of the Essential Elements evaluation

What a beautiful thing it is to see an act of love. Indeed what a beautiful act we have just witnessed. What warmth and happiness it brings to our hearts as we watch these honorable men of All Hallows and Brother Tim Smyth from St. Laurence High School in Chicago, Illinois, renew their vows to God. Yet we the students at All Hallows are so blessed to see such a rare act every day. We often complain naturally as teens about "going to school" and "waking up early" yet everyday if there's one constant here at our school no matter the time, no matter the day, it is the Brothers. As our days as seniors begin to set I have begun to realize what the Brothers have meant to me personally and to my fellow seniors. Although we call them Brothers, some of us know them for what they truly represent, a father figure. Whether its Brother Dunbar's patience, Brother Hamilton's dedication to us students through his work with the student government, Brother Casey's funny and caring nature, Brother O'Toole's ability to put a smile on our faces with his world famous thumbs up or Brother Bechner's father-like presence; the Brothers have been a solid, caring presence. Over the past four years and for many years to come, these men have taught us not only math, English, or religion but in the spirit of our patron, Blessed Edmund Rice, they have also taught us to pursue excellence in our endeavors, to stand with those marginalized by poverty and injustice and they have formed for us a loving community of faith. These men have unselfishly devoted themselves to us. So the next time you see a Brother, thank him for his dedication, thank him for showing compassion and love, and thank him for taking the vow that has made us all the men that we are and the men that you will become. On behalf of the staff and the students, we thank you for accepting your call to love and serve us here at All Hallows in the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice and Our Lord Jesus Christ. May God bless you all.



Jericho House, Wainfleet, Ontario

Jericho House Youth Leadership, Justice & Spirituality Center is an ecumenical and interfaith retreat center in the Catholic tradition. An ideal location for retreats, meetings, conferences, and seminars.

Info: Jericho House 10845 Rathfon Road, Port Colborne, ON L3K 5V4;

P: 905-834-0553, F: 905-834-5230

www.jerichohouse.org

The Jericho House Team:

Sister Jacquie Keefe, cssf, Brother Bill Carrothers, cfc, Mr. Gary Bowron

IONA COLLEGE

New Rochelle, New York

Spring Break: Iona in Mission - Moderator Reflections on Bolivia trip; Ms. Christina DeCrescenzo, '08 - Enrollment Coordinator, Admissions



**Ms. Christina
DeCrescenzo**

"I have never been as proud to be an alumna and employee of Iona College until I moderated the Iona in Mission Bolivia trip this past spring break. Traveling to Cochabamba, Bolivia, with some of Iona's brightest, open-minded and motivated students I have ever met was an experience that changed me forever. Meeting and volunteering with the Christian Brothers (the unsung heroes of this world) has given me a greater sense of how amazing our college truly is. After 28 hours of being on three different planes, at four different airports, 11 Gaels arrived at 11:36, 9 de Abril - home to the Christian Brothers living in Cochabamba. We were welcomed whole-heartedly into their home and an experience that would alter the course of each of our lives.

While serving in Bolivia, we encountered the most unimaginable and extreme cases of poverty and abandonment, yet paired with those stark realities we also witnessed the remarkable workings and blessings of God and the magical, Jesus-like spirits of the greatest men I have ever had the honor of spending time with. The Christian Brothers dedicate their entire being to the betterment of the human race on a daily basis without ever hoping for recognition or kudos. They are the true champions of this world - making sure the poor, orphaned, abandoned and lonely children of the city have the bare necessities to get through each day and survive. They have opened Centro Hermano Manolo,(CEHM), a safe haven for the needy children and young workers of the city to ensure their well-being: personal, educational, family and social, just to name a few. It is the children's place of peace. In addition to the center, the Brothers play an integral part in the local schools and neighborhoods in the city - walking to the highest peaks of the Andes Mountains to make sure the children are safe before bed time.

We lent a hand at an orphanage where 45 girls were left on the side of the street to die, visited a local "colegio" where students are learning without the most basic needs required to learn, helped street children with homework at the CEHM, climbed the highest mountains to visit private homes in the deepest dimension of poverty and threw a fiesta at a local daycare for children that never receive such happiness.

We left Bolivia better people, wanting to do more with our blessings and do better as human beings. The Christian Brothers showcased how that was possible and the children of Cochabamba showed us why. Our lives were changed forever and we came home as individuals who recognize no matter where you are on this great planet, whether at Iona College or in the Andes of Bolivia, we are all connected. We all are looking to see if we matter and if we are loved and we can all lend a hand and take a step forward to making the world a better place."



A sophomore's reflection on his volunteer mission to New Orleans



Matt Romano

I left for New Orleans with my life heading in one direction. I returned with it heading in the complete opposite direction. Growing up my older sister knew what she wanted to do from the day she was born. I never had a plan for my life. I did not have a clue what I wanted to do. As a sophomore, I declared a criminal justice major. Not because I felt passionately about my desire to work in that field, but because I didn't know what else I wanted to do. My attitude was, "why not?"

The New Orleans mission's trip, the most amazing experience of my life, changed that. I was given the answer to the "why not" I had asked myself in the past. The same way I did not know what to expect when declaring a major, I did not know what to expect when I headed down to New Orleans. Spending seven days together in this amazing city, the sixteen people who accompanied me taught me more than I could

have ever imagined.

One lesson I learned occurred on a ten-minute return trip from Home Depot, in the back of a pickup truck, my life changed irrevocably. Beautiful trees, cars, people and houses passed me. However, there was still so much destruction. Most of the people driving down the road have grown accustomed to the devastation. While I had my iPhone out to capture what my words couldn't describe, the residence and every day commuters seemed to have a blank stare as everything flew by them when they carried about their day. They seem to act as if this is how things always were.

We pulled up to Trinity Lutheran Church, where we had been working and as I got up to jump out of the truck I froze and just stared. What I saw took my breath away. Twenty-five people from all over the country, who had no tie to the city, no reason to be there, were all working together, as hard as they could, to complete a church.

There was one thing off about the situation, though, and it took me a while to figure out exactly what it was. Everyone working had been working for hours; they were covered in sweat, and looked exhausted. Yet, they all had smiles on their faces. Not only that, they continued to smile until the day's work was done. In that moment I realized that until then, I had had it all wrong. I realized what I want to do. My passion is to give my life helping those who need it in any way I can.

People ask all the time what life the meaning of life is. This trip helped me create my own definition. An anonymous author wrote a poem that help put what I learned and experienced into words. It reads, Life is not about keeping score. It's not about how many people call you or your number of Facebook friends. It is not about who you have dated, are dating or haven't dated at all. It's not about who you've kissed. It is not about what sport you play or how your favorite sports team is doing. It's not about your shoes or hair or the color of your skin. It's not about where you live or went to school. It's not about grades, money or what colleges accepted you or not. Life is not about if you have a lot of friends or if you are alone. It's not about how accepted or unaccepted you are. Life just isn't about any of the mundane "things" we allow to distract us from what REALLY matters.

The fact is, life is about who you love and who you hurt. It's about how you treat and what you do for others. Life is about trust, happiness and compassion. It's about sticking up for others and replacing inner hate with love. Life is about avoiding jealousy and overcoming ignorance. It's about what you say and what you mean. It's about seeing people for who they are and not what they have. Most important, life is about touching someone else's in a way that would not have achieved otherwise.

I can truly say the trip, and its members not only touched my life; it, and they, changed it. In that one brief moment, I began a new journey. Since then I changed my major to public relations and have been getting more involved at school. This would make for a nice resume or college essay, but not that's not why I do what I do. Instead of being a student just passing through campus going about my day, I choose to be a student who

extends helping hand to anyone who needs it.

The definition of compassion is a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering. The Christian Brothers are the epitome and embodiment of compassion. My team and I devoted one week of our lives to help the people still suffering from damage of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Giving up our spring break may seem like a lot but it really is not when we look at the Christian Brothers, who really know the meaning of sacrifice. They devote their entire life to serving others. They gave up and give up so much to help the people around us every day. I learned this first hand. While we were in New Orleans our Iona Men's Basketball Team made the NCAA National Tournament. We all wanted to watch the game together and without any hesitation the brothers provided for us. Brother Casey, Brother Concannon and the other Brothers, as well as Father Michael Joseph gave their time and opened up their Parish to us. They set up chairs, ordered food, and let us watch the game on a projector so large that felt like we were in a movie theatre. Two days later the Brothers opened up their home to us for a dinner and a reflection of the week. What really was humbling about everything they have done for us was we weren't the ones suffering. We were there to serve other. And while we were serving others, the Brothers were still serving us. There is no tangible gift they can receive or expression of thanks that correctly justifies all the work the Brothers not only did for us, but what they do for others on a daily basis.



Iona College students hosted by the Christian Brothers community in New Orleans.

Yet, that is not even the most important lesson I gleaned from my trip to New Orleans. The most important lesson I learned was during the last day. We all sat in a circle, remembering the events of the week and the laughs we shared. Everyone kept saying how happy they were with the way the trip turned out. As my new friends continued to say that it hit me; we are not in control-God is.

He has a plan for me just like he had a plan for that whole trip. The church I attend at home had numerous opportunities to participate in a trip to New Orleans.

Unfortunately there was always a complication and I was not able to take part. I now see that God had a planned my trip to New Orleans before even enrolled at Iona College. His plan is perfect and I am thankful for that plan because I would not exchange my experience in New Orleans, and everything He has done since then, for anything in the world. Even when we don't understand it or see it unfolding, I know that we need to trust in Him and in His plan. Because when we do, anything is possible. Mahatma Gandhi said and I believe to be true is that "The best way to find yourself, truly, is to lose yourself in service of others."

Visit Iona College at www.iona.edu

MOUNT ST. FRANCIS
St. John's, Newfoundland

SPRING IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Br. G. D. Fitzpatrick

It's snowin' and blowin' and slippery
It's spring in my native home!

It's days like this that prompt me
To leave this place and roam!

But where can I go and find me
A climate so cranky and odd?

It's the only place on our planet
To challenge the virtues of God!!!



Taken in the waters next to Quidi Vidi in St. John's at the end of April.



EDMUND AT 250 – FAITHFUL TO THE FUTURE
A SPECIAL YEAR MARKING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BIRTH OF BLESSED EDMUND RICE

On 1st of June, 1762, Edmund Rice was born in Callan, Co. Kilkenny, Ireland. In 2012, his life and legacy continue to inspire countless people around the globe. His story is preserved and alive in a special way at Mount Sion, Waterford, the location of his first community and the final resting place of his remains. In this special year of memory and hope, we look forward with Edmund and seek to be faithful to a future shaped by a vision of the Gospel which he embraced with his whole being.

Order of Day

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 – 11 am | Gathering time and welcome - plaza |
| 11 am | Opening Prayer followed by keynote address Dr. Daire Keogh |
| 12:30 pm | Presentations, displays by various groups of the Edmund Rice Network, tours of the museum and chapel |
| 1:30 pm | Lunch and social time |
| 2:30 pm | Reflection with Brothers Philip Pinto and Martin Kenneally in the Chapel |

Evening Event

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:00 pm | Evening Prayer in the Edmund Rice Chapel followed by a concert of sacred music with “Dulcet” and the “Waterford Peace Choir”. Refreshments following |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

EDMUND AT 250 – FAITHFUL TO THE FUTURE

MOUNT SION – WATERFORD
1ST JUNE, 2012

REPLY FORM

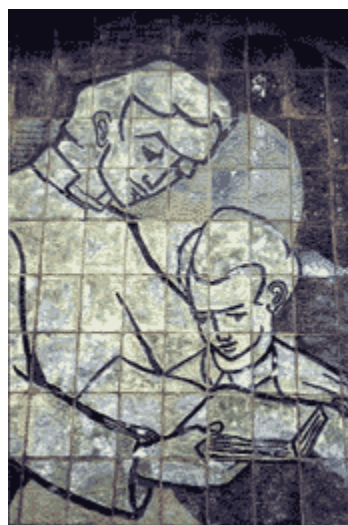
Name of Community: _____

Number Attending: _____

R.S.V.P. by Friday, 18th May, 2012

Email: admin@edmundrice.ie

Tel: +353 (0)51 874 390



The Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers
invite you to a
DAY OF FESTIVE CELEBRATION
in the
Edmund Rice International Heritage Centre
Mount Sion, Barrack Street, Waterford, Ireland
Friday, 1st June 2012 to celebrate Edmund at 250

R.S.V.P. by Friday, 18th May 2012 to:
Email: admin@edmundrice.ie
Tel: +353 (0)51 874 390



Becoming a Brother

The Edmund Rice Christian Brothers welcome you as you seek to discern God's call in your life. We hope and pray that this will be a time for great insight into who you are and where God is calling you.

You are already on the journey toward becoming a Brother: you have a strong faith, no doubt you have thought and prayed about becoming a Brother, you have contacted us for more information.

The formal process of becoming a Christian Brother is done in five stages:

- Contact,
- Candidacy,
- Residency,
- Novitiate, and
- Annual Profession.

These all offer opportunities for you to grow in your understanding of religious life. You will have numerous opportunities to experience prayer, community and ministry with the Christian Brothers.



Throughout your journey you will receive support and encouragement from the Brothers, who welcome the willingness of each individual to explore the Brothers' way of life in prayer, community and ministry.

In the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice, the founder, the Congregation of Christian Brothers is an international community of vowed religious brothers living and praying in community and missioned by the church for Christian education. The men the Christian brothers seek to join with them are Catholic men who sense a call to live in fraternal community and who wish to minister in the educational apostolates of the church, especially to youth. They are men with the religious inspiration and dedication necessary to live a life of consecrated celibacy and who, through vows of poverty and obedience, place their gifts, talents, and possessions at the disposal of the community in order to meet the needs of God's people. Please contact Brothers Jim McDonald at bromaccfc@yahoo.com, or visit our website at www.cfcvocations.org.

More information on the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers at these links:

Global Edmund Rice Network
Edmund Rice Christian Brothers NA
Edmund Rice International
Christian Brothers Vocations
Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation

www.edmundrice.net
www.ercbna.org
www.edmundriceinternational.org
www.cfcvocations.org
www.edmundriceinternational.org/jpic