

**PRESENCE
COMPASSION
LIBERATION**

Christian Brothers Oceania
ERN Newsletter -Qld



Vol 2 No 2 April 2010

In this issue we see examples of where the Spirit of Edmund is flying free !!

A New Pentecost!!

The recent volcano in Finland seems to be a metaphor for our times. Out of the frozen ground volcanic ash has spewed forth into the atmosphere covering the sky and landscape. Some things have been destroyed by fire; others engulfed in lava. For thousands of kilometres ash has covered the landscape of the European continent. Nothing will be the same. Fire, wind and rock- all the primary elements are there. They are the symbols of the Spirit at work. Everyone and everything will be affected in some way. Despite our efforts we cannot control what is happening. The familiar landscape we used to know has been changed forever. And like all the planes we are now being "grounded" in a new reality. As we look around our world at this time we see a powerful force erupting through rigid structures to bring about dramatic change. A new consciousness is breaking through. What are the old structures being washed away to release the spirit and renew the face of the earth? What is being asked of us at this time as people of the planet and as people committed to Edmund? A new Pentecost for our time!

Footprints in The Park

St Edmund's

Footprints in the Park is an opportunity for students of St Edmund's College to engage with members of the homeless community of Ipswich.



St Edmund's is one partner of Christian Community Care, the group that run such BBQs most weeknights at sites around Ipswich. Christian Community Care also provides religious services, clothing and counselling support for those in need. On Wednesday 3 February, 12 students and 3 teachers volunteered to bring and cook a basic BBQ dinner to Queen's Park to share with those in need of food and a sense of community. The students had the opportunity to engage in right relationships with members of the Ipswich community who are often 'invisible'. Their positive action meant, at the very least, the members of the homeless community had the stress of providing a meal for their family alleviated. It was a successful night with many of the first time volunteers looking forward to the next opportunity. Come along again next fortnight and in the future.

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July 2-4 Riverglenn

Representatives from all ERN Wisdom Groups across Oceania will gather in Brisbane on that date. The purpose will be to re-visit the wisdom of network and networking. In 2011 an Oceania gathering is planned that will enable a fuller representation and deeper discernment as to where this movement is going. These steps are in part of a process to assist the ERN to have a voice at the next Oceania Chapter.

Wisdom groups do not possess all of the wisdom but are people who have met and tried to discern what is being asked of the ER network at this time. There will be opportunities for people to have a shared understanding of the ERN.

Building Bridges



The Bridge Program is a State government funded program working with groups of 5 young people for 10 weeks to re-engage in an educational environment. These young people are currently disengaged from education and have been involved with the youth justice system or are in out of home care. The program's teacher is part of a team who supports the young person to transition to school or a learning environment. Programs are based at the Deception Bay, Townsville and Mt Isa Flexible Learning Centres.



Acknowledging the Turrbal and Jagerra Peoples as traditional owners and custodians of Brisbane.

Sowing Seeds –Learnscape



Nudgee Junior College

Nudgee Junior has expanded a program that will regenerate the local creek (running at the back of the conference centre) with native plants, construct an indigenous garden with local, native plants. We continue to get support from our community through sponsorship. The goal of the project is to serve others, acknowledge the traditional owners and create an enjoyable natural working environment for all. The program provides many opportunities to learn about:

- Productive gardening techniques: seed propagation, crop rotations, harvesting, water conservation etc
- Conversations are often a feature covering everything from the Broncos to the next English assignment .
- Curriculum links: students weighing, measuring, budgeting and constructing in a very safe 'life-like' setting.
- Pastoral care: relationship healer and cooling off zone for some students.

The produce from the Learnscape is donated to a charitable organisation or the elderly within our community. Flowers grown will be given to some old folks homes (for want of a better term) to add more colour to their lives. Thanks to Wayne Green and maintenance staff.

Keith Halpin, Nudgee Junior College)

Refugee Family Day Picnic



(Some of the Afghani women at the Picnic– Zahir, Narzia and Farah)

March 13, West End

For the last 5 years, ER campers have been offering a picnic to refugee Afghan families several times each year. The first one was in early Dec 2005 at the Roma St Parkland the week after the Cronulla race riots and there were over 100 people involved. With numbers spilling out, it was decided to restrict the numbers to a more manageable number.

And then someone suggested Orleigh Park at West End. With its beautiful shady trees and idyllic setting on the Brisbane River this has proved to be the perfect spot for families and ER young adults to meet and share a bbq. After some lunch, the ERC leaders organize sports and games for the children. Not just a few soccer balls have found their way to the middle of the river to be rescued by passing boats!

Meanwhile the Afghani mums enjoy the quiet with a cup of Afghan tea. None of this would be possible without the generosity of Edmund Rice young adults, many of whom are finishing their studies or are working professionals.



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Rose Kum Fundraiser

23 March, Oceania Province Centre

Tegan White organised a reflection and donation for Rose in PNG. Below is some information about her situation. Rose Kum, 41, a special education resource officer from the Callan Services for Disabled Persons at the Divine Word St Benedict's campus in Wewak, has been diagnosed with a brain tumor that can only be removed by surgery overseas. Rose holds a bachelor's degree in special education from Divine Word University and a masters in inclusive or special education from the University of Newcastle, Australia. After a brain scan at Wewak General Hospital, Rose was referred to neurosurgeon Dr William Kaptigau at the Port Moresby General Hospital who advised her to have the tumor removed overseas within the next three months.

Peace & Justice



(Peter Doherty, Donna Mulhearn & Dave Andrews)

March 24, Xavier Support Centre

The Peace & Justice course was run over 4 nights during March. Participants came from ER Camps and from several Colleges. The group explored justice perspectives that included our own experiences, different cosmologies, structural analysis, compassion and non-violence. On Wednesday March 24 the group joined other members of the public for the launch of Donna Mulhearn's book, "Ordinary Courage". Dave Andrews, introduced the night. Journalist Peter Doherty then dialogued with Donna about her experience in the Human Shield in Iraq and its consequences back home. A ver powerful story! A very human story!

Mindfulness

April 24, Xavier Centre



It was a beautiful Saturday morning at the Xavier Support Centre amidst natural surrounds cradled by the winding Brisbane river. I sat in the presence of friends in the Christian spiritual tradition, sharing with them the Buddhist perspective on mindfulness - its context and principles, and transformative methods of practice. We sat in silence and presence as I guided the group in mindfulness of breathing and meditative cultivation of loving-kindness. In letting go of all our mental constructs and ego-drivenness, It seems as if we were all suddenly stripped of the boundaries that divide and graciously transported into the ground of our common humanity.

For me, I felt as if an unseen hand has drawn us closer to God and closer to one another as living vessels of that Love in whom we live and move and have our being (to borrow the terminology of my Christian brothers and sisters). After our morning tea, we walked together in mindfulness along the riverside, placing mindful steps on the green grass, smelling the wild flowers, listening to bird calls, and holding hands with open hearts and clear minds. We sang a mindful tune, the *gatha* (verse) of Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh lifting our spirits and directing our awareness into the moment We finally sat again in contemplative silence, rejoicing in, and dedicating our joint efforts and energy to the well being of all. The bell rang three times.

Final prayers in Tibetan and Pali sealed a miraculous morning concluded our time. As we closed up the Centre to make our separate ways home, auspicious raindrops began to fall robustly on our heads as the morning sun hid behind the clouds - a shower of grace drenching my heart with joy, reminding me once again of the miracle of being awake and alive. A new beginning ... a deeper friendship ... a common partaking of that Mystery beyond all words.

(Chris Kang, honorary research advisor in Buddhist Studies, Uni Of Qld)



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EdgeWork
Conference 2010



Many thanks to Wayne Knowling for the Logo design

Sunday August 22nd and Monday 23rd August
Amberley Retreat Centre
Lower Plenty, Melbourne, VIC
Cost: \$350.00 per person
Registrations Close on 23rd July 2010

The EdgeWork Conference is open to all those in ministries that work
"on the edge" and are inspired by the work of Edmund Rice.

Further info: Contact Linda Houston
0414386417 or email lin-

ERN Gathering

"Cry of the Earth & the Poor"

Resourcing for Eco/Social Justice

Guest Speaker: Phil Glendenning

Date: Tues June 2

Venue: St James College

Time: 5.30- 7.30 pm

Contact: bjdarcy@edmundrice.org

Festival Edmund Rice

St Leo's College

Wednesday May 5 (6.30pm – 9.00 pm)

(Founder's Feast Day with Jan Novtka)

Schools & the Church of the Poor Workshop

May 13 - Assoc Prof James B Nickoloff,

St Laurence's College, South Brisbane,

10 a.m. – 3.15 p.m.,

to book and for enquiries,

contact Madeline Kift at

Madeline.kift@erea.org.au or on 03 9426 3206.

Urban Contemplatives

June 26– Sufism

Xavier Support Centre

9.30 -11.30 am

Cost: Donation

Contact: bjdarcy@edmundrice.org



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