



Edmund Rice Services



Maasin Diocese – The Philippines

Greetings from all of us at Maasin.

The Typhoon of the Philippines or *bagyo* in tagalog , is just spoiling for a fight from July to October, if not sooner or later. The cycle in the Philippines of wet season, dry season and typhoons is very distinct. The devastation they create each year is shattering, both emotionally and financially.

The months of July and August were on high alert for typhoons and floods. The strong winds of typhoons are dreaded by the local people on the coasts for fear of losing their houses to the winds and losing lives to unexpected flashfloods. In Manila (the target of typhoons and flashfloods this year), life has been made difficult for many a family.

Davao city and other places in the Mindanao area in southern Philippines have experienced flashfloods due to heavy rains. Many people lost their lives and many became homeless. The rising water in the river in Bangkal prompted residents to evacuate their houses for fear of repeated flashfloods. The local church served as the evacuation center for the affected residents.

Fortunately, we are all very safe in Maasin and there has never been even a sign of any hazardous situation where we are living.

Amidst all the challenges we have been making steady progress in our ministry. We have already identified three needy High Schools on which to focus:

- a. San Rafael National High School;
- b. Baugo National High School (both located in the high country behind Maasin city); and also
- c. Ibarra National High School (an established struggling High School in our parish).

We have been in touch with these schools for Campus Ministry, Back-to-School Ministry and Disability. There is mounting enthusiasm amongst the staff and the students and also in the Diocese.

Mr. Milvin Pagangpang a teacher and co-ordinator for Campus Ministry for San Rafael National High School reports:

SAN RAFAEL NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

San Rafael, Maasin City – The Philippines



**Mr. Milvin
Pagangpang**
square meters.

San Rafael National High School is one of the twelve public secondary schools in the newly established Maasin City Division. Its mother division is the Division of Southern Leyte. San Rafael Barangay High School was established in 1966 through the efforts of Mr. Ramon Garces and Hon. Sofio Labata, on the elementary campus. In 1981, the school was transferred to its own site 275 kilometers away from the heart of the barangay. It is situated on top of hill which stands on an area of 10, 000

The school has twelve academic classrooms, one computer room and one non-instructional room. Run and managed by a school head, it has eleven teachers and a nurse. The average population for the last three years is 377 coming from Barangay San Rafael and ten other neighboring barangays.

Although most of the people have low income and unstable jobs they are supportive of school activities and projects. The school and its stakeholders are working together to produce quality graduates fully equipped with knowledge and skills to prepare them for life.

Lately, the students' academic achievement and performance indicators as well, are moving towards the targeted mean percentage score. The school facilities are utilized and maximized to

facilitate learning. The instructional materials though inadequate, have contributed much to the academic performance of the students.

But still, the school needs programs, projects and financial support to fully achieve its vision, mission, goals and objectives. It would develop the whole personality of the student; enhance the teacher's professional growth and development; and facilitate the acquisition of the desired learning outcomes.

In the years to come, San Rafael National High School, will move towards the peak of its fulfilment, a progressive, empowered, high performing school through competent teachers and supportive stakeholders working harmoniously with the school administration, to produce fully integrated graduates and worthy citizens for a better future.



**Most Rev. Precioso
D. Cantillas, SDB,
D.D.**

On the 13th July, the Bishop introduced the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers to his Diocese during the clergy meeting. Paul Coster the Program Leader and also the Community Leader initiated the whole process by giving in brief an idea about Edmund Rice Services in the Diocese. Then each of the Brothers explained to the gathering the important aspects of our ministry. We could sense hope and co-operation in the group. We joined the Bishop and the Diocesan Clergy for a sumptuous meal.

30th July was a most significant day in the history of Maasin Community. The land and the house were transferred from FCJ (Faithful Companions of Jesus) to the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers. The Oceania Province and in particular Brs. Peter Harney and Bob Young have kept a regular contact with the Maasin community in making sure that all the legal procedures were completed in time. We also thank Srs. Judith and Elvisa for completing all the necessary formalities required to be done from their side.

Peter Clinch and Lynne Moten visited us in the first week of August. Peter conducted a session or two in the midst of all the activity in Maasin. He presented an overview of



Br. Peter Clinch (extreme left) and Mrs. Lynne Moten (extreme right) in Maasin Community

Edmund Rice Ministry, Values and Characteristics Statement and urged us to highlight these aspects in our ministry in Maasin. On behalf of the Province Leader Br. Vince Duggan cfc, he handed us our appointment letters. Graeme and Peter had an opportunity to present to the community in brief the direction that Kabankalan would take with regard to future ministries. On the whole the whole experience was enriching.

Lynne Moten is a Director of Service Learning at Seymour College, Adelaide, South Australia, paid us a visit at the same time that Peter was here. She accompanied us on some of the trips to our ministry places in Maasin Diocese. We have certainly benefited from her vast experience of student overseas ministries to India and other places. We thank both Peter and Lynne for their valued support.

The following sums up the situation at Maasin as we see it and feel it, at the present time; "Planting has been done and new shoots are beginning to appear..."

Daghang Salamat
Many thanks

fromMaasin Community-The Philippines.