



A New Energy!

Exploration of Different Forms of Commitment

Twelve years ago Cath Ford began living in community with the Christian Brothers, first in Murupara but mostly in Westport. She lives the “common life” along with the Brothers, placing any earnings into the common fund and relying on community resources as well as committing to prayer and retreat and expectations for Province or Cluster gatherings.

Some people have included in their marriage vows a commitment to the values Edmund Rice championed. Others have been exploring ways in which they can effectively volunteer much of their active life to Edmund Rice ministries. Yet others have wondered how they might be in a community supported by a common spirituality and with a common outreach to the marginalised.

These people and others with similar yearnings and partially developed ideas seem to be looking for some type of formal way of committing to the Edmund Rice charism. They may express the commitment in terms of an affiliation to the Christian Brothers, or a commitment to a ministry of justice, or a hope for companionship on a search for their God. They are attracted by something they see in the life and aspirations of Edmund Rice and those who are inspired by him. They are experiencing a, perhaps vague, desire to put something of their life on the line in a similar way to Edmund.

The options for making formal commitment to a particular charism used to be largely limited to the commitment of religious life or perhaps to associates, third orders or affiliates. There are now other formal groupings of people in the Church who may be religious or lay, married or single but all belonging to a particular society inspired by a particular charism. There is also a vast range of people who have individually committed their lives in service inspired by particular charisms and we have a huge number of such people in the various Edmund Rice ministries and enterprises. However it is to those who wish to explore, in association with others, the making of some sort of formal commitment to the charism of Edmund Rice that the following is addressed.

The Oceania Province would like to facilitate the conversation among like-minded people interested in similar types of formal commitment to the charism of Edmund Rice. A number of such people have already made their names known to their local Edmund Rice Network Coordinators. It is envisaged that people who seem to be seeking something similar will be put in touch with one another forming “Focus Groups”. The purpose would be to see whether there can be developed some possible pathways that might respond to the yearnings in each person. These different Focus Groups might discuss such things as a Charter, the scope of commitment they are dreaming of, any daily prayer/ritual, any social involvement they may envisage, what words there might be in a commitment statement. In short, they are asked to try to determine what they are calling into being, and why. There will be someone appointed as a Focus Group Coordinator who will facilitate the discussion in each of these groups.

After these initial conversations it is planned to name a Commission. The Commission will receive the ideas of the different Focus Groups and see whether there are any emerging possibilities for pathways

which might reflect the directions people are feeling the urge to explore. This Commission would be a resourcing and an encouraging group which would coordinate the continuing wider discussion among the various Focus Groups. It would assist in the establishment of any new formal grouping.

If you are interested in becoming part of a Focus Group to discuss with others a form of commitment to the Edmund Rice charism please contact your local ERN coordinator if you have not already done so. The coordinators are charged with gathering the names of such people and forming groups of people who seem to be searching for similar types of commitment.

So the steps planned are:

1. People interested in exploring the making of a formal commitment to the Edmund Rice charism contact their local ERN coordinator.
2. The ERN coordinators with the Focus Group Coordinator facilitate the clustering of people seeking similar pathways so that those people can continue their discussions.
3. The Focus Group Coordinator (yet to be named) contacts the different groups to see what assistance is required in furthering the conversation within the group.
4. A Commission (yet to be established) is established to receive reports from each of the Focus Groups and to promote sharing among the groups.
5. The Commission works with the various Focus Groups to identify a handful of possible new pathways to different types of commitment which can then be developed and refined further and promoted among the ERN.

The ERN coordinators are:

Jim D’Arcy	bjdarcy@edmundrice.org	(07 3327 2220)
Damaris Kingdon	dlkingdon@edmundrice.org	(64 21 66 2657)
Danny Moore	dmoore@stpats.vic.edu.au	(04 2734 1447)
Donna Mulhearn	dmulhearn@edmundrice.org	(02 9810 3922)
Jillian Parker	jcparker@edmundrice.org	(08 9365 2841)
Natasha Siebert	nmsiebert@edmundrice.org	(04 3850 5400)

Joe Lauren

Now is the time...

Eight years ago, the 2002 Christian Brothers’ Rome Chapter named all those women and men bringing life to new and existing expressions of Edmund’s charism *the Edmund Rice Network*. The word *network* continues to prompt a range of reactions from within our Network, a likely reflection of the range of understandings of what it means to *be* Network. Variety is good. No single definition can capture all our Network is or hopes to be. But have we really embraced the wisdom given to us at the 2002 Chapter? Perhaps now is the time.

Admittedly, in the years since that Chapter, we have learnt that if we focus too much on the Network construct, we risk losing sight of a far more important reality – the energy, goodwill and spirit that transcends the many and varied works we do through Edmund’s inspiration – the mortar that holds us together. Consequently, the subtleties in meaning have seen us focus more recently on the language of *networking* rather than *network*.

The globalization of our planet has seen the art of networking flourish across all fields of human endeavour. But for what purpose do we network? Some network to meet their own needs. Others are more magnanimous in their

outlook and recognise the mutual benefit of networking. For us in the Edmund Rice Network there must be a distinctly different motivation. As a network of people who *proclaim liberation and justice for all creation*, our questions of networking are not about me or even about you and me. Our question must surely be - how does networking enhance our mission to bring about liberation and justice for all life?

Imagine our potential as a liberating force in this world if this question was at the heart of our networking. This is the potential we are really yet to contemplate much less realise. Perhaps now is the time.

The 2008 Oceania Chapter called the Oceania Leadership Team to *determine suitable forums to engage the Edmund Rice Network before and at the time of the next Chapter*. 2010 is the first stage in a journey of engagement that will lead us to this critical time in our Network story. During July 2 – 4, representatives from newly formed ERN Wisdom Groups will gather in Brisbane. Our purpose will be to re-visit the wisdom of network and networking. A larger gathering is planned for 2011 and our journey will all the time be working towards the realisation of an authoritative gathering of ERN representatives at the time of the next Oceania Chapter.

Neither the Wisdom groups nor their representatives can hold all the wisdom but they will be charged with creating an ongoing wisdom dialogue throughout our Network so that we are all growing ever closer towards our potential. Yes – now is the time.

Danny Moore
ERN Regional Coordinator – VIC/TAS

Protecting the Coral Sea

The Australian Marine Conservation Society is trying to build community support for its campaign to protect the Coral Sea in the world's largest marine park. It has over 23,000 signatories to its petition so far. (Go to the link below to sign the petition online.)

Staff of the Society are available to give presentations to groups all around Brisbane about the Coral Sea and why it is worthy of protection. The presentations explain where the Coral Sea is, why it is worthy of protection for both cultural and environmental reasons, and what the Society is doing to protect it. The very tip of the area on which the campaign is focused is of particular interest to the adjacent Indigenous communities. The Cairns based campaigner is working with the Traditional Owners to work out potential usage rights and how to work together for the benefit of traditional use as well as the health of the environment. This area may, for example, be closed to commercial fishing but open for traditional use.

The presentation includes a practical segment, during which participants can join in writing personal letters to their MPs while they are all together. The presenters have a great collection of photos from a recent trip to the Coral Sea. The length of the session can be tailored to the interests of the group.

For more information or to arrange a group presentation contact:

Daisy Barham
Coral Sea Community Campaigner
Australian Marine Conservation Society
PO Box 5136, Manly 4179, QLD
Email: daisybarham@amcs.org.au
Tel: (07) 3393 5811
Web: <http://marineconservation.org.au/>

Sign our petition online <http://marineconservation.org.au/WhatWeDo.asp?active_page_id=164> to help create the world's largest marine park in the Coral Sea

Inter-faith Calendar

April	23	St George's Day	Christian
	28 - May 1	Theravadin New Year	Buddhist
	29	Ninth Day of Ridvan	Baha'i
	30	St James the Great Day	Orthodox Christian
May	01	Beltane – Samhain	Wicca northern & southern hemispheres
	02	Lag B'Omer	Jewish
		Twelfth Day of Ridvan	Baha'i

Let's Get to Know Our Neighbours

Oceania Province Papua New Guinea Programme June 26th – July 8th 2010

A programme, facilitated by the Formation Life and Mission Directorate of Oceania Province and Catholic Mission, to encourage a sense of connecting, as regional neighbours and as a Church, between individuals from the Oceania Province of the Christian Brothers, staff from Edmund Rice Education Schools in Australia and staff from New Zealand Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition with individuals and programmes, (including Callan Services) within the parishes of Wewak and Goroka; PNG.

The preparation and experience of this programme will provide the opportunity for each participant to develop further and practice their justice spirituality.

Costs for departures from Brisbane: \$2500

For application forms and enquiries please contact;
Martin Kelly
Oceania Province Project Officer: Volunteers and Immersions
mfkelly@edmundrice.org
+61 7 36219673 / +61409575892

Damian Nelson
Catholic Mission Education Officer- Immersion Programmes
dnelson@catholicmission.org.au
+61 7 33369239

Novitiate News - Bhopal, India

There are six second-year Novices who began their programme in February 2009 and will finish a week before Christmas 2010.

Two first-year Novices have just arrived in mid-March to commence their two-year cycle:



New Cluster Leader announced

Oceania Province Leader Brother Vince Duggan has announced in a Circular to the Brothers of 16 April the appointment of Brother Ian Robertson as the new Leader of the Queensland/Philippines Cluster A. Ian has been part of the team at the Edmund Rice International Heritage Centre in Waterford, Ireland for the past five years. Vince thanked Brother Tony Hempenstall for his dedication and commitment as Cluster Leader and wished him well for his renewal time ahead. Ian will return to Oceania in May to take up his new role. The prayers and good wishes of the Cluster and the whole Province go with him.

Caritas campaign

Edmund Rice International supports the Caritas International global campaign to promote supply of and access to medicines for children living with HIV/AIDS and is encouraging all Edmund Rice Schools to become involved in the children's letter-writing campaign.

Contact Edmund Rice International for further information or visit the website:

www.edmundriceinternational.org

Oceania Province Centre welcomes Brother Brian Davis

Oceania Province Centre is keenly awaiting the arrival of Brother Brian Davis in June. Brian will be taking up the newly created position of Province Electronic Records Project Officer/Archivist working alongside the Oceania Province Records Manager/Archivist. Brian's two main projects will be the implementation of an Electronic Document Records Management System and the development of digitisation guidelines and standards for the Province.

As with a great number of records managers/archivists Brian fell into the position after teaching for 40 years. Although not keen at first he was offered the position of Archivist at St Patrick's College, Ballarat. Living up to his belief of giving things a 'red hot go' Brian persisted through the demands of the sixteen major assignments and twenty four hours of external exams to complete the Graduate Diploma of Science from Edith Cowan University, picking up the Margaret Jennings Award for the most outstanding graduating student at the grand age of 65.

Outside of the archives Brian is a very keen competitive swimmer joining masters swimming in 1991. To date he has over 600 medals to his name, and lists his proudest achievements as: 200m Butterfly gold medal and 100m Butterfly silver medal at the World Masters Games in Melbourne in 2002. His Australian

records for 400m and 800m butterfly and Victorian records for freestyle and butterfly from 200m to 1500m.

Brian transferred his passionate belief in physical activity and keeping the body fit as a means of developing strength of character to the boys of St Pat's, where he was Director of Swimming from 1985-1990 and 1994 to now. The team has been unbeaten in the Ballarat Associated Schools Swimming competition for the duration of the competition, 31 years to be exact! It is in no small part due to the dedication and commitment of Brian.

We look forward to Brian's enthusiasm and knowledge when he arrives in Queensland.

Tegan White

Brother Brian Davis receiving his award at Edith Cowan University, February 2007



Left to right: Professor Karen Anderson, Br Brian Davis and Br Tony Kelly, who was Brian's first Headmaster

Web Site

The Policies, Guidelines and Forms for Oceania are to be available on our website. At this stage the Human Resources section is populated. Check them at: <http://www.edmundrice.org/Policies--Guidelines-and-Forms>

Oceania Updates

Please send any information or news items for Oceania Updates to the Province Publications Coordinator, Brother Nev Thornton, Email: ntthornton@edmundrice.org

I am particularly interested in receiving any good quality images of people, places, sights and faces throughout Oceania.