



Dealing with Life's Burdens

In next Sunday's gospel reading, Matthew offers us a glimpse of Jesus reflecting on his relationship with God: *"All things have been given to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him"* (Matthew 11, 27). Then, quite abruptly, Jesus proceeds to extend an invitation which seems to have little connection to his train of thought: *"Come to me all you who labour and are heavy-burdened, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11, 28).



As I puzzled over this reading, my thoughts turned to several pieces I had recently read. The first was a report I had read in Monday's edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It was about Rajab, an Afghan man who has spent most of his life living in refugee camps in Pakistan, Iran and Malaysia: "It's been more than thirty years that I have been a refugee. Really, it is my whole life as a refugee. I married my wife as a refugee and she was a refugee. My kids are refugees and my grandchildren are too. This is the life for us." Despite all this, Rajab's wants are simple: "All I want is a place where my grandchildren can go to a proper school. I dream of a place to stay that's mine, and a little garden to look after." What a burden that man and his family have been carrying for almost as long as he can remember!

I thought, too, of the fact that a little earlier this year there was a commemorative service to mark the 15th anniversary of the Dunblane Massacre in Scotland. A former scoutmaster by the name of Thomas Hamilton burst into the gymnasium of the local primary school and gunned down and killed 16 five-year-olds and their teacher, before turning his gun on himself. What a burden for the families of those children and for a small, regional community to have to carry!

Finally, I recalled the story of Private Joseph Schultz, a German soldier whose unit was sent to Yugoslavia after Hitler's troops had invaded that country. One morning, Schultz's platoon sergeant detailed him and seven of his peers to go on a patrol. They were not given any details as to what their mission was until they came over a hill and found five men and three women bound and blindfolded. When they had come within fifty feet of these people they were halted and ordered to execute them. "Ready", the sergeant barked, and they raised their rifles. "Aim", he ordered, and they adjusted their sights. But suddenly, in the silence, there was the thud of a rifle butt hitting the ground. The sergeant and the other soldiers turned to see that Joseph Schultz had put his rifle on the ground and was walking toward the group of Yugoslavs. Even though his sergeant ordered him to return to his position, the soldier kept walking until he joined the group to be executed. There was a long pause before the sergeant yelled, "Fire". When his colleagues came to bury him, they found in one of the pockets of Schultz's battle jacket a quote from Paul's letter to the Corinthians: *"Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope and patience never fail"* (1 Corinthians 6-7).

By comparison, our burdens are generally relatively light. Most of us don't have to bear the burdens of a Private Schultz or a Dunblane community or of Rajab, a man who has been more than thirty years in refugee camps. Yet we all have burdens of one kind or another. We feel hard done by when we have long delays in traffic or at the doctor's surgery or in the motor registry. We've all experienced the burden of having someone close die a slow and painful death or of being betrayed by a close friend or trusted institution. We've all been exasperated by Church leaders who have failed to respond with compassion to victims of abuse. And we've all struggled with the burden of doubting whether our lives have really been worthwhile. We wonder if we are really more than what we have achieved or acquired. We worry about what others are saying about us and whether we are still valued once we've stepped back from full-time ministry or school leadership. If we're asked to seek out a part-time ministry, we wonder if Province leaders still have confidence in us. If we're

retrenched from employment or forced by failing health into hostel accommodation, we can begin to doubt the value of our life's contribution and find ourselves burdened by depression.

But it's important to remember that we're not alone in all this. After all, isn't that the very same burden that Jesus had to face when he was confronted by the "devil" in the desert? He had to struggle with the question as to whether his worth was in what he did and achieved: "Demonstrate to people that you have something to offer, by turning these stones into bread." "Do a stunt and jump from the temple pinnacle into the arms of the crowd below so that they can proclaim you as their champion." "Bow down and worship me and in return I'll give you all you ever dreamed of. Then you'll be a somebody." But Jesus was able to recognize that his value was in much more than anything he might do, say, have or achieve. He had been assured by God: "You are my beloved Son, my favour rests on you." That's the identity to which Jesus clung through all the ups and downs of his public ministry. He was praised and flattered, rejected and stitched up. And when he hung on the cross, he momentarily doubted God's fidelity. As brothers (and sisters) of Jesus, we are given the exact, same assurance by God as Jesus was. There will be times when we get angry with God and blame God for giving us a raw deal. But ultimately, we have to remember that our relationship with God is one of trust. It's not a commercial deal or a contract to be honoured. It's a relationship of love and trust. When love and trust are the foundations of our relationships with God and others, there is no burden that cannot be borne.

Julian McDonald for the OLT

Inter-faith Calendar - WORLD

Visit the Inter-Faith Calendar [here](#)

Visit to Australia - EAST AFRICA DISTRICT

From 16 June, Francis Otieno, Catherine Gathogo (secondary head teacher at Embulbul) and Eva Mugo (primary head teacher at Embulbul) will be travelling to Australia for two weeks. They will be attending a fund raising event organised by the Zimele Foundation in conjunction with the Edmund Rice Foundation. The fundraiser will be in aid of our ministries in East Africa and Francis, Catherine and Eva will be speaking at that event.

They will also have the opportunity to visit some of the Brothers' schools that have been wonderful benefactors over the years, such as St. Joseph's Geelong, St. Bernard's Essendon and St. Kevin's Toorak. We thank all those involved in planning this visit: Tony Paatsch at St Bernard's; Tom Purcell at St. Kevin's (and Zimele) and Bill Wilding, Peter Hogan and Robert Stone from the ER Foundation. We wish Francis, Catherine and Eva all the very best for their visit.

East Africa District Newsletter
No 148 13 June 2011

Third Annual Zimele Foundation Dinner held - VIC

On Saturday evening 25 June, around 480 people attended a most successful 3rd Annual Zimele Foundation Dinner at St Kevin's College, Toorak. Special guests in attendance from Br Beausang Catholic Education Centre (BBCEC), Embulbul, Nairobi, were Br Francis Otieno (Principal), Ms Catherine Gathogo (Head Teacher, Secondary) and Ms Eva Wanyaga (Principal, Primary).



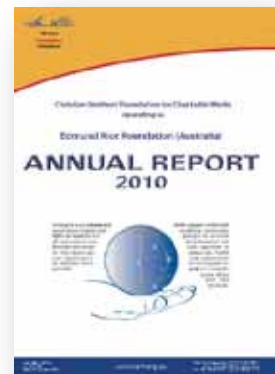
John Corbett
Catherine Gathogo, Tom Purcell

Francis and Eva addressed the gathering, raising awareness of the circumstances of the local people in Embulbul and outlining the educational opportunities being made possible through the generosity of their Australian supporters. Funds raised this year will enable the completion of the new BBCEC Primary School and provide ongoing support for Ruben Centre.

Francis and Eva paid tribute to Tom Purcell (Chair, Zimele Foundation) and thanked him for his outstanding support. An immersion group comprised of recent old boys and current staff, whom Tom will be accompanying to East Africa within the next week, was presented to the gathering.

Robert Stone (Foundation Office)

Download a PDF of the Foundation's Annual Report 2010 [here](#)



Congratulations on opening of Jericho House - CANADA



On 29 May, a longtime dream of Br. Bill Carrothers, cfc, and Sr. Jacquie Keefe, cssf, came to fruition with the official opening and Blessing of Jericho House in Wainfleet, Ontario on a 17 acre site surrounded by forests and grasslands

European Province Updates
Vol III Issue 12 15 June 2011

Read the complete report in the Welland Tribune [here](#)

More information about the centre is available on the website www.jerichohouse.org

Greetings from the Novices in Lusaka - ZAMBIA

We, Stephen Wanjala, Sammy Bundi and Joseph Makokha send greetings. We have been back in Lusaka at ISC more than two months now after spending our pastoral placement/experience away in different parts of Zambia (Sammy in Lukulu, Stephen in Kabwe and Joseph in Kasama).

Now the focus of the Novitiate is turning to Religious Life as a Brother, the Mission and the Religious Vows. All of this is preparing us for the final stages of discernment concerning the decision to apply for First Profession.



In between times we are involved in Outreach ministry, Sammy in Home Based Care at Ng'ombe, Stephen in teaching at Ng'ombe Community School, and Joseph at Mother Teresa's Hospice in Mtendere.

Most recently, as with all the Novices we were involved in the Welcoming Ceremony to the Congregation Leadership Team and Province Leaders as they began their meeting in Keating House hosted by Richard. It was a memorable ceremony, as the photo shows.

East Africa District Newsletter
No 148 13 June 2011

Letter from Executive Director to EREA staff - AUSTRALIA



As educators we deal with information, knowledge and wisdom. In considering the relationship between them, TS Eliot once asked: 'Where is the knowledge that is lost in information, where is the wisdom that is lost in knowledge?'

Our modern world is desperately seeking leadership in identifying what is of lasting importance. Our culture values the acquisition, organization, and dissemination of facts, more than it does the getting of wisdom, which Ram Dass suggests, 'requires the emptying and quiet opening of the mind, the application of the heart, and the alchemy of reason and feeling.' This surely is the stuff of Catholic education!

Wayne Tinsey
EREA Executive Director
14 June 2011

Read the complete letter on the website [here](#)



Director Oceania Formation Mary Murphy and Region Co-ordinator Formation & Ministries Gerard Keating in discussion

Combined Ministry & Formation Coordinators Meeting - OCEANIA

A combined meeting of Coordinators of Ministry and Formation with the respective Directors took place in Tugun over two days, 21 and 22 June. The nine people present were engaged in fruitful sharing and decision making around issues of common concern.

Topics covered included Policy Development and Compliance, Memorandums of Understanding, Proposals for Province-wide gatherings, Human Rights and Ministry, Justice Coordination, Ecological Footprints.

Further work is being done by Working Parties on some of these areas to bring them to some point of further development.

All present affirmed the opportunity to work collaboratively and cooperatively together in these very crucial areas of province life. The comfortable accommodation and relaxing setting of the Brothers' Units at Xavier Dunes, and the welcoming hosting of Br Ted Walker assisted in making the gathering very productive. The Directors – Mary Murphy and Peter Clinch – did a fine job in bringing all aspects together successfully.

Shane Wood

Westcourt farewells Lee Maxfield - WA

These days there are times when the office is a very quiet place. Sadly with the restructuring this year we have lost Gay, Noelene and more recently Lee Maxfield from the Finance Department. Others who frequently work away from Westcourt are Vince Sinagra who works two weeks a month from the Melbourne Office, Donella Brown and Richard Mavros from Formation, Pauline Meemeduma (Child Protection – Policies & Protocols) and EREA Staff who spend much time in our WA and SA schools.



Vince Sinagra, Lee Maxfield, Steve Jenkins, Joan Shintarinata, Pat Kelly, Karen Armenti

It's good to have the regulars, Edmund Rice Camps (Ash Little, Ami Walker, Carly Mercadante and Mel Everley), Archives (Karen Vann and Sandrine Biras), Steve Jenkins (Health Care), Pat Kelly (Cluster Leader), Joan Shintarinata (Support Officer – Brothers Welfare/Finance) and Karen Armenti (Support Officer – Admin & Property and a dozen other things too). And it's good to have Karen back in the office after her few weeks away while hospitalised and recuperating. Welcome back Karen. We missed you.

Pat Kelly
WA Cluster Chronicle 5/11
23 June 2011

ERI highlights Australia's first challenge: her first, last and next people - GENEVA

On 8 June 2011 Australia responded to the Working Group of the Human Rights Council on its Universal Periodic Review. Australia accepted, in whole or in part, 94% of the 145 recommendations that the other States had made to it, which is commendable.

On behalf of Edmund Rice International and its partners, who had submitted a joint submission to the UPR on Australia, Moy Hitchen made an oral statement at the session. Moy stressed that there were still human rights that needed defending in Australia. These included those of Indigenous peoples, and their self-determination, those of recent refugees and asylum-seekers, especially those held in detention, and those of the peoples of low-lying islands, threatened by Australia's inaction on carbon emissions.



These three groups have been called, respectively, by our Oceania Justice Centre, Australia's First Peoples, her Last Peoples, and her Next Peoples. Their wellbeing remains a touchstone for how well Australia respects human rights.

Moy Hitchen delivering a response to the UPR of Australia at the Human Rights Council

ERI June Newsletter

Final Profession - TANZANIA



We are all anticipating the celebration of the final profession of Simon Kaswahili this Saturday, 2 July at Edmund Rice Secondary School Sinon. The celebration will commence with Eucharist at 2 pm, followed by a celebratory meal.

East Africa District Newsletter
No 150 27 June 2011

Our prayerful best wishes go to Simon, his family and the Brothers of the East Africa District.

Feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help - AFRICA

Read the letter from Brother Richard Walsh, Leader of the Africa Province, addressed to the Brothers on the occasion of the 27 June feast-day of Our Lady of Perpetual Help [here](#)

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.

CAST YOUR NET WIDER

www.edmundrice.net