PRESENTATION STUDIES

1. The life of Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice (Weeks 1 and 2)
   1. Early education
   2. School in Kilkenny
   3. Introduction into Business
   4. Marriage and Tragedy
   5. Spiritual Life
   6. Charitable works
   7. Works of mercy
   8. Ministry to Poor Boys
   9. First school-stable
   10. Search for Teachers
   11. Religious congregation
   12. Suffering-Penal Laws
   13. Death
   14. Beatification
   15. Canonization
   16. Feast Day
2. Blessed Edmund Rice’s Congregations (Resource Personnel-Br. Robert)
   1. Christian Brothers and Presentation Brothers (Week 3)
   2. Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Temple / School Song (Week 4)
   3. Work of the Brothers (Week 5)
   4. Vocations (Week 5)
   5. Communio Edmund Rice (Week 6)
3. Presentation Brothers Mission in the World: Ireland, England, U.S., Canada, Africa, Pakistan (Weeks 7 and 8)
4. Presentation Brothers Mission in the Caribbean-Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia (Weeks 9and 10)
5. Presentation Brothers Mission in Trinidad
   1. San Fernando (Weeks 11 and 12) (Resource Personnel- Br. Michael Samuel
      1. (formerly St. Benedict’s College)
   2. Chaguanas (1959) (Weeks 13 and 14) (Resource Personnel – Rev. Simon Rostant)
      1. formerly Pamphilian High School (Canon Max Murphy)
      2. formerly St. Philip and St. James

Student Activities  
1.Comprehension Passage  
2. Word Sleuth  
3. Crossword  
4. Quiz/Fill in the blanks  
5. Classroom Presentations  
6. Essay  
7. Group Project

**HISTORY OF PRESENTATION COLLEGE SAN FERNANDO**

The early history of Presentation College, San Fernando begins in 1930, when a small school called St. Benedict's was established in a lowly basement beneath the San Fernando Presbytery on Harris Promenade.

This was the first Catholic secondary school in South Trinidad, and was set up in response to the requests of the Catholic population - as well as many non-Catholic residents - there. After repeated petitions to the Archbishop of Port-of-Spain, the latter directed the Benedictine Fathers of Mount St. Benedict to start the college as a diocesan institution, and on March 31, 1930, the legacy began.

Under the spiritual directorship of Rev. Fr. Sebastian Weber, OSB, and with a teaching staff of two (Mr. Vincent

 Ferrer and Mr. Mitchell), St. Benedict's opened with twenty-three students on its roll, including such names as RaphieGillezeau, the Espinet brothers, the Hart brothers, Steve Bennett, Elwin Maingot, and Rex Latour.

From this small beginning, there was rapid progress. In November of the same year, the Benedictine Fathers purchased the Colony Buildings and grounds at La Pique, nestled at the foothills of the San Fernando Hill. This six-acre site was the former residence of the Governor during his visits to South Trinidad, and cost some £5,000 to acquire.

**Relocation (1931-1933)**

Rev. Fr. Odilo van Tongeren, OSB, returning from Downside Abbey, England, took up duties as Principal of the new St. Benedict's College. It was his keen foresight and business sense that led to the purchase of the Colony Buildings and surrounding grounds, and the buildings were refitted with a recreation hall, a library, and eight classrooms capable of holding some 190 students. The College was soon settled comfortably in its new home.

During Fr. Odilo's regime, Mr. H. N. S. McDavid joined the staff, as did Churchill Johnson, R. M. Hercules, Albert Rigsby, and Fr. Wilfred Broens, OSB. Under his principalship, too, the College made its first attempt at the Cambridge Local examinations, and both candidates - Kenneth Lamsee and Ben Winchester - passed. It was during this time, too, that the College made the first tenative steps towards obtaining government recognition and aid.

**College Grounds (1933-1934)**

It was the Rev. Fr. PlacideGanteaumme, OSB, who, during his short two years as College Principal, and with characteristic grit and determination, made the first assault on San Fernando Hill. Armed with pick and shovel, he began the grueling task of manually converting

 the quarry into a playground fit for the students. It was indeed inspiring to see principal, staff and pupils all working together on this project.

This period must also be remembered for the annual bus outings to Mount St. Benedict on the feast of the patron saint, the additions to the staff of Rev. Fr. MaurusMaingot, OSB, Rolando Corbie, Harold Araujo, and Smokie Ford. It was during this period, also, that the College realised its first successes in the School Certificate examinations - Gerald de Verteuil, Clive Evans, Rex Latour, Gerard Montano, and Ben Winchester, the latter who placed fifth in the island.

**Grand-Scale Developments (1934-1939)**

This was the era of Fr. LudgerNauer, OSB, and was characterised by lofty but practical schemes, some of which materialised in his own day, while others were shelved on the outbreak of war.

He set up the first Science Laboratory, which was formally opened by Lady Fletcher, wife of the then Governor of Trinidad, and which was operated by Cecil Lai Fook and later by Eugene Bertrand.

Fr. Ludger saw to the building of the first Chapel, introduced a College Song,   
and published in March of 1936 the only St. Benedict's College magazine. It was during this period that the St. Benedict's Home, a boarding house, was built.

According to the 1936 magazine, "(the boarding house was) intended mainly for boys whose parents reside away from San Fernando. The catering is done by a capable lady, whilst the Benedictine Fathers are responsible for the disciplinary part of the Home."

Monthly boarding fees of $20 and tuition fees of $16 helped the College finances.

This period saw the College football XI win the SAFA Second League for the Leiba Cup in 1934; it saw Roy Seon win a place on the SAFA forward line, the first College student to play representative football.

It also saw its first Cantata and other concerts organised by Mr. Churchill Johnston, a tour to St. Vincent in 1937 and another to British Guiana in 1939, and several open air boxing tournaments. Cricket coaching sessions during this time by ex-international cricketer George John and BG Intercolonial cricketer ChatterpaulPersad would later realise results in the form of the invitation of several of our College players to the

 Trials for Intercolonial cricket.

Additions to the teaching staff were J. E. Borneo, Ken Mungal, F. A. Hoyos, E. Lowe, Cecil Lai Fook, Ben Winchester, Mrs. Andre, and Rev. Fr. Boniface, OSB. This period saw Ramnath as the first full-time member of the grounds staff. It was at this time that a young Gerard Montano revealed himself to be a leading light in the Debating Club conducted by Mr.Hoyos.

**War Years and Immediate Post-War Period (1939-1947)**

This was the regime of Fr. Boniface, which saw the construction in 1945 of what is now affectionately known as the "Old Block," the organisation of a Sea Scouts group and construction of a Boat Club, the introduction of the Prefect System (with Jim Paul and Terrence Greteau as first Head Prefects), the start of the Legion of Mary, and the winning of the Cow and Gate Cup, emblem of supremacy in Intercollegiate football in Trinidad.

It was at this time that Mr. Mac, with the aid of Mr. Page, Captain of the Fleet-Air-Arm Football XI, began to introduce the third back method of play in the College Team which was then skippered by Jim Paul.

Leon Leacock had already become famous as the youngest player ever to play representative football in Trinidad, when he was selected to represent SAFA at the age of fourteen. John Streetly had begun to reveal his penchant for mountain-climbing by numerous assaults on the San Fernando Peak via the most inaccessible routes.

Rev. Fr. WillibrordVonk, OSB joined the staff during this time, as well as Ralph Boland, Aubrey Garcia, and Victor de Castro.

**The Presentation Takeover (1948)**

Rev. Fr. PlacideGanteaumme was recalled from St. Vincent in 1948 to prepare the College for the takeover by the Presentation Brothers, the latter who had begun to arrive in Trinidad in December of the previous year. Br. Kelley of Presentation and Fr. Placide of St. Benedict's were the principal figures in this momentous act in which the old order gave way to the new, and the Presentation Brothers began the gigantic task of reorganising the College to cope with the new conditions, new requirements, and new material. The Presentation era had begun.

Patrick Chin-Hong

Taken from the school’s website

**HISTORY OF PRESENTATION COLLEGE CHAGUANAS**

Presentation College as we know it today started off as a vision of the late Canon Max Murphy, a man moved by compassion and understanding for the underprivileged youth of Caroni. Concerned for their welfare, he saw the need for some form of secondary education to be made available to them and with the permission and encouragement from the late Archbishop Count Finbar Ryan; a foundation was laid to pave the way to Presentation College, Chaguanas.

At that time, it was known as the Parish school but this was later changed to Pamphilian High School and a later still, to the college of St. Phillip and St. James.

As time progressed it became clear that the school had exceeded its target of producing merely ‘educated’ citizens of Chaguanas and county Caroni. The government, having realised the wealth of potential, initiated assistance to the college in 1949. During that time the college was under the direction of the Catholic Board of Management of Trinidad with Mr. John Burns as principal.

The inevitable growth of the school population caused a strain on the resources and a subsequent demand for better accommodations. This problem was solved when land was provided by Endeavour Estates, Chaguanas at minimal cost and two-thirds of the capital necessary for the construction offered by the government. The formal commissioning of the new college, PCC as it is know today was held in March 1959 by the then Education and Culture Minister, Dr. Patrick Solomon.

Approximately one month after establishment, the Presentation Brothers took over operations, having being requested to do so by His Grace. In April 1959, Brother Livinus Kelly assumed leadership and began what would be a long and memorable rule by the Presentation Brothers.

The spirit of the Presentation Brothers continues to live on in the hearts and minds of proud Presentation College students and staff.

# Presentation College Chaguanas: Golden Jubilee

JM Feheney fpm

## Introduction

During the academic year, 2012-2013, Presentation College Chaguanas (hereafter abbreviated to PCC), Trinidad and Tobago, is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of its association with the Presentation Brothers. Though I will discuss the early history of the College, below, it may be helpful to the general reader to give some background information on the place, the country and the education system within which PCC operates. Trinidad was discovered by Columbus during his third expedition in 1498, but it remained a backwater possession of the Spanish Crown for some two hundred years. Compared to Cuba, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico, Trinidad, about the size of Munster, was a modest possession. Moreover, it was only because no serious attempt had hitherto been made to capture it, that it had not fallen to the burgeoning British Empire before 1797. But, fall it did in 1797, and this was the start of Trinidad as a British Colony. The much smaller and less developed island, Tobago, was linked to Trinidad in 1889 and the two have formed one country ever since. The country, calling itself Trinidad and Tobago, became independent in 1962, styling itself a dominion within the British Commonwealth.[[1]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn1" \o ")

During the two hundred years, while the country was under the Spanish Crown, a plan was put into effect whereby, through the offer of generous land grants, French citizens were induced to settle in Trinidad. The plan, known as the Cedula (1783), was issued a few years before the French Revolution. When the Revolution spread to the French islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe, and fighting broke out between the Royalists and Republicans, the Royalists, who, for the most part, were landowners, packed up their belongings and came to Trinidad with their slaves. They immediately became beneficiaries of the Cedula and they soon built up prosperous estates. The British were pleased with the arrangement because it led to a significant growth in agriculture, trade and business. A census, taken in 1797, showed that about 18,000 French immigrants had come to Trinidad, following the French Revolution of 1789. French missionaries followed the French immigrants, who were nearly all Catholic, and for a hundred years or so, more French than Spanish was spoken in Trinidad. In this way, some well-known French families became established and built up large estates. They became known as French Creoles and both their surnames and their descendants (De Verteuil, de La Forest, de Gannes, de Gourville, Lamont, Lapeyrouse, Lange, Peschier, Ganteaume, de Voux, Quesnel, Sellier, de Labastide, d’Abadie etc) are still prominent in Trinidad, less so in Tobago.[[2]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn2" \o ")

## Education

The foundations of Catholic education were laid by the Catholic clergy, many of whom were French. The majority of the Catholic primary schools were private initially, but, gradually, they won grant aid from the British Colonial Government. The French also established the first secondary schools, which were fee-paying. From 1870 onwards, however, the Colonial Government adopted what became known as the Dual System of education. This meant that grant-aided denominational (including Catholic) schools operated side by side with Government-controlled schools. This arrangement led to a significant growth in Catholic grant-aided primary and secondary schools. With the advent of political independence and the rise of local political parties, there was a perceptible desire to see the control of education firmly in the hands of a native government. This desire was counterbalanced, however, by an equally strong desire to maintain a system that had proved successful and which catered for both pro-and anti-denominational advocates in education. Moreover, the sheer excellence of Catholic schools frequently made them first choice for most parents. So, in December, 1960, a historical agreement between the Government and representatives of religious denominations was signed. This became known to posterity as the ‘Concordat’, which, for more than fifty years has ensured Government aid for Catholic primary and secondary schools.[[3]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn3" \o ")

## Presentation Brothers

I have elsewhere[[4]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn4" \o ") told the story of my first visit to Presentation College, Chaguanas, in September, 1959, but for the benefit of those who have not read this account, I will summarise it here. I had arrived in Trinidad and Tobago the previous day and was eager to see the school to which I had been assigned. The school had moved some months previously into a green field campus, and the new school buildings were obviously the pride of everyone connected with the College. After touring the library, the principal’s office, the staff room and a few classrooms, we went to see the playing fields. We were in the middle of the wet season and the first thing I saw in the middle of the field was a pair of giant water buffalo, sunk to their heads in two large water holes, which they had made for themselves. Nearby were some goats, two of which were tethered in a nice patch of savannah grass, while, some distance away, a skinny cow was also tethered. There was no fence around the campus and I noted that the animals did not confine their perambulations to the so-called playing field, but, instead, wandered all over the campus, the goats eating any shrubs that did not have thorns. The story of the transformation of the unfinished campus I saw on my first visit in August, 1959, into the attractive and picturesque one, to which I bade farewell twelve years later, is a story of hopes and disappointments, underpinned by ongoing planning and hard work, but, also, of joyful achievement and a feeling of being part of a great project. Though it may sound pretentious, we did feel that we were helping to build the kingdom of God on this piece of soft earth.

## History

What later became Presentation College, Chaguanas (or PCC), began as a private secondary school, under the management of the Parish Priest of Chaguanas, Rev Max Murphy. The school, under the name of Pamphylian High School, opened in May, 1941. It operated for more than two years before being registered with the Department of Education as a private secondary school in September, 1943. The school was inspected by the Department of Education in 1944 in response to requests from the manager for a) government grants and b) affiliation to Queen’s Royal College, Port of Spain, a Government institution, which was one of the most prestigious secondary schools in the country at the time. Neither request was granted.[[5]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn5" \o ")

In 1949, however, the College, now renamed College of SS Philip and James, received recognition as a Government Assisted School. This was a big advance since the salaries of teachers would now be paid by the Government and a capitation grant for maintenance would also be forthcoming. Mr John Burns, a retired secondary school principal from Scotland, was appointed principal and, though initially he was the only graduate on the staff, he soon established a sound academic tradition. In 1959, in response to repeated requests from Archbishop Finbar Ryan of Port of Spain, the Presentation Brothers agreed to assume responsibility for the school. When Mr John Burns retired in April, 1959, Brother Henry Livinus Kelly (known as Harry to his friends) was appointed principal in his place. I joined him as deputy principal at the end of August, 1959, and for the next two years, we were the only Presentation Brothers in Chaguanas.[[6]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn6" \o ")

## Dwelling House

In 1960, shortly after the official transfer of ownership to the Incorporated Trustees of the Presentation Brothers, Harry began building a dwelling house for the Brothers on the school campus. The building was designed by Harry himself and included some special features. There was a corridor front and back running the entire length of the house, with six bedrooms, a bathroom and a community room upstairs. Downstairs were a kitchen, dining room, reception room and oratory. The entire outer wall on the southern side was made of perforated bricks, designed to facilitate a breeze through the house. It will be remembered that these were the days before widespread air conditioning. The perforated bricks, from floor to ceiling, proved to be a debatable advantage, for, while they did facilitate a ‘through’ breeze, they also gave free entry to small animals and insects, including snakes. Almost every night some snakes, most of them harmless, crawled through the openings and one of my tasks every morning was to locate these snakes curled up in corners and throw them out in the grass.

The most notable feature of the surrounding area was the fact that it was flat, cultivated land, mainly devoted to growing sugar cane. There was a sugar factory on the edge of Chaguanas and many of the parents of our students worked in this industry, either as agricultural or factory workers. To the west of us, between Trinidad and Venezuela, was a large mangrove swamp encompassing about 10,000 acres. This area was a haven for sea birds, especially the Scarlet Ibis, the Roseate Spoonbill and different species of egrets (Cattle, Snowy and Little). Trinidad itself was a birdwatcher’s paradise, since, being geologically part of mainland South America, it was home to many species of South American birds.

Both Harry and I were lovers of trees and plants and, once the grounds were adequately fenced, we planted lots of trees and flowering shrubs. A favourite tree for shade in that climate is the Samaan, or Rain Tree, an evergreen with a dome-shaped spread. We planted these all around the boundaries of the playing fields and they provided wonderful shade for students who wished to sit and watch a cricket match. In between the Samaans, we planted Pink and Yellow Poui, which flower at the beginning of the dry season. We also had Flamboyante, Frangipani (Plumeria Alba), Hibiscus and Bouganvillea . There is a great choice of flowering shrubs in the tropics and they are less vulnerable to attack and destruction by voracious ants. I cannot leave this section without mentioning my favourite scented plant: Lady of the Night (Cestrum Nocturnum). I can still remember its heady perfume floating up to my bedroom at night, as I swatted off mosquitoes, while sitting at my desk marking student assignments.

That last sentence has made first mention of one of the few disadvantages of Chaguanas. This was the fact that it was a great haven for mosquitoes. The proximity of the swamp and the general low lying situation of the land meant that, especially during the wet season, there were many pools of water, in which mosquitoes bred. Though the place would generally be clear of mosquitoes during the day, once darkness fell about six o’clock, they came out in clouds. During the night, we spread muslin nets over the beds and we generally escaped bites, but between sundown and bedtime was a hazardous period. Though the temperature might suggest wearing shorts and a singlet, self-protection demanded that all flesh be covered up for fear of mosquito bites. This is not to say that precautions, such as Citronella oil, were not taken, but even these precautions did not ensure immunity from attack.

## Playing Fields

By means of planning and hard work, first Harry, and then I, managed to lay out and develop one of the most attractive school playing fields in Trinidad. The veranda on the northern side of the Brothers house provided a choice grandstand view. It was especially pleasant to watch a game of cricket from there. I remember watching many exciting inter-school cricket games, often with Brother Cyril, our games master, walking up and down and muttering to himself, whenever our team reached a critical point in a match. It was on this veranda that I was the unwitting cause of a verbal explosion from Cyril that cost us a record in the Trinidad and Tobago Schools Cricket League. I was at my desk, marking student assignments, while I kept an eye on the cricket through my open door and window. Cyril was restlessly pacing the corridor outside as our captain and chief batsman, Ram, waited to take strike at the wicket. He was already 96 and a boundary 4 would give him a century, which would be the first century ever scored in schoolboy cricket at that level. Our supporters were yelling ‘Four Runs! Four runs!’ to let Ram know they were expecting a boundary and that nothing less would satisfy them.

As Ram waited for the bowler from the opposing team to run up and bowl, Cyril came into my room and spotted a large cigar case in a jam jar on my desk. I had put a small snake into this cigar case, while conducting an experiment to determine how long the snake could live without food. The little creature was already in the case for four weeks. But, owing to pressure from upcoming examinations, I had temporarily forgotten my experiment and my little snake. Cyril grabbed the cigar case, while remarking, ‘I like your taste in cigars, Matt!’ Just as Ram was about to take strike, Cyril unscrewed the top of the cigar case. The little snake shot out his head and his tongue and Cyril screamed. When he heard the scream, poor Ram took his eye off the oncoming cricket ball and was bowled out. The umpire put up his finger, indicating that Ram was out and our crestfallen hero began his lonely walk to the pavilion. Our supporters groaned and Cyril exploded, ‘Blxyzt you, Matthew. You and your bloody snakes!’ Ram later captained the Trinidad and Tobago cricket team and played for the West Indies, but Cyril always maintained that the best innings he ever played was in the College pitch in Chaguanas, the day I messed up the century he was about to score. But such is life!

**Enviable Academic Tradition**

Though the first GCE Advanced level class began in 1960, the subjects initially offered were confined to Languages and Modern Studies. The same year, I began the first class in physics and chemistry, using the new laboratories. Our students were keen to learn and discipline was excellent. Teachers were hard-working and very professional and parents were most cooperative. Within a couple of years, students were winning scholarships. These scholarships were valuable because they covered all tuition, travel and living expenses of the student during the entire course of a first university degree of his/ her choice. Then as now, the Government was generous with university scholarships, but the most prestigious ones were then known as ‘Island’ (now Open) scholarships. There were 4 of them, one in the Science division, one in the Mathematics division, one in the Languages division and one in Modern Studies. Moreover, the student from Trinidad and Tobago, scoring the highest marks in the GCE Advanced Level Examination, was awarded the coveted Gold Medal. A student of Presentation College San Fernando won this award for the first time in 1959, while the first student from PCC won it in 1969.

The winning of the Gold Medal in 1969 by Surendra Solomon in the Science category (Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and compulsory English paper) was not only the highlight of several years of solid work by students and teachers but also the beginning of a new era, in which PCC established itself as one of the premier Catholic secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago. This is evident from the annual list of Government scholarships won by its students, as well as by the fact that it has now won the Present’s Gold medal for the best academic performance in the secondary school leaving examination twelve times (1969, 1981, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2012) . In 2012, PCC led all the schools in Trinidad and Tobago by winning 11 Open Scholarships and 11 Additional Scholarships and, in addition, won the President’s Gold Medal for the third year in succession. Moreover, this was the second time that the school had won this medal three years in a row.[[7]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn7" \o ")

## **A School Community**

PCC also works hard at integrating different strands of its school community. An important strand of this community has been the Past Students Association, established in 1969, and ever since a powerful support and informal public relations agency for the College. Past pupils of PCC are prominent in every aspect of public life in Trinidad and Tobago. One of its best known past students, is Jack Warner, a prominent politician and Government minister at home, while internationally known in football administration circles. In the Catholic church, there are some PCC past students among the senior clergy, including Fathers Joseph Jubrasing, Benedict Hilaire and Gregory Ramkissoon. Mgr Gregory Ramkissoon deserves a special word, since he is not only a senior priest in the archdiocese of Kingston, Jamaica, but is also the founder of the Ecclesial Community, The Mustard Seed, in Kingston Jamaica. The Mustard Seed Community is now an international charity, working for the poor, neglected and marginalised in several countries, including Jamaica, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and Zimbabwe.

PCC past students are also prominent in the medical and caring professions and names such as Drs Anthony Ferdinand, Victor Coombs, Sharma Saith and Professor Granum Sant, to mention but a few of my own past students, are regarded as models of medical practice and excellence. Nor have PCC old boys shunned the academic life. Professor Hubert Daisley is Professor of Anatomical Physiology in the Medical Sciences Faculty, at the University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine, while Dr Anthony Ferdinand is a lecturer in Public Health and Primary Care.

## Development over the Years

Though PCC, as seen above, has an enviable reputation in both sport and scholarship, it has remained a medium sized school, with a total enrolment of less than 650 students. Other similar schools are considerably larger. Brother Livinus Kelly was principal from 1959 to 1962, while I followed for nine years. After Livinus, came Brother Leonard Dennehy, who was principal from 1971 to 1982. He was followed by Brother Benedict Taylor (1982-1996). The first lay principal was Bernard Pierre, an old Presentation Boy. He was principal from 1996 to 1999. In 1997 the Presentation Brothers withdrew from Chaguanas, whereupon the property and management of PCC was transferred to the Archdiocese of Port of Spain, in whose care it continues. Simon Rostant, an old PCC boy, was the next principal (1999-2008). When Simon retired, Jeffrey Jagbirsingh, deputy principal, acted as principal for two years until the current holder of the post, Mr Gary Ribero, was appointed principal in 2010.[[8]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn8" \o ")

Both Presentation schools in Trinidad (Chaguanas and San Fernando) are now owned and managed by the Archdiocese of Port of Spain. The Catholic Education Board of Management is the body established by the Archdiocese to manage all Catholic schools, whether primary or secondary. Though this body receives applications and makes recommendations for the appointment of teachers, including principals, the actual appointment is the sole responsibility of a permanent Teaching Service Commission, independent of but appointed by the Government. The Government, through its Ministry of Education, pays both teachers’ salaries and maintenance grants. There are no school fees in either Government or Government-assisted schools. Like schools in Ireland, however, most Catholic schools in Trinidad and Tobago engage in fund raising, not only to pay for new buildings and additional facilities, but, at times, to bridge the gap between Government grants and actual operational expenditure.

## The Future

Though it is now fifteen years since the Presentation Brothers left Chaguanas, the Presentation ethos is still discernible at PCC. The first evidence of this is the PCC website. At the top on the left hand side is a reproduction of Sassoferrato’s lovely painting of the Madonna and Child, while on the right is the official crest or sigillum of the Presentation Brothers. In the centre is the PCC logo. It is doubtful if there is any Presentation College/school website in the world more overtly Presentation than this one. Then there is the PCC Mission Statement, part of which reads:

Presentation College Chaguanas, inspired and authenticated by the mission, charism and spirituality of the founder, Edmund Rice, reaffirms its commitment to foster, promote and provide a total Christian formation, permeated with the spirit of love, where the spiritual, academic, physical and moral dimensions of every pupil’s human and religious developed and valued and nurtured.

Pupils of all religions and cultural traditions are welcomed into the Presentation Family, united by a shared belief in a loving creator and by determination to achieve excellence in the many facets of their development. (PCC Mission Statement).

Readers in Ireland should note in particular the determination of PCC to remain a part of the Presentation Family, a concept that is only now being explored by some of our Irish school communities. The PCC school song makes explicit the sentiments suggested by Sassoferrato’s painting of the Madonna and Child at the top of the website. This song contains a virtual catechesis on the meaning and significance of the Presentation. The first verse reads:

Virgin of the Presentation, humble handmaid of the Lord,

Mother, by predestination, of the one incarnate Lord,

Bless our school and bless us all;

On thy loving name we call.

It is within this context that we raise some questions that have relevance for all the schools and colleges formerly managed and staffed by Presentation Brothers, but now in the care of lay teachers. These questions include: to what extent, if any, can the Presentation ethos be maintained in a school that no longer has Presentation Brothers on the staff? What is the ‘Presentation Ethos’? What are the manifestations of it? What indicators of it can we reasonably expect to find in the work and lives of administrators, teachers, students and relevant others who claim to be members of the Presentation Family? Though we do not have the space to attempt to answer these questions in the present article, we will attempt to answer them in a future publication. Meantime, if we look at PCC today, we see characteristics that we admire and that we would like to feel are part of the Presentation ethos. These characteristics include:

1. A Christian orientation (vide PCC Mission Statement)
2. A fidelity to the educational ideals of Bl Edmund Rice (vide PCC Mission Statement)
3. An openness to receive students of every race and religious tradition (equivalent to the realisation of the ideal in the T&T National Anthem, ‘Every creed and race find an equal place’ (vide PCC Mission Statement)
4. Commitment to the holistic development of students (vide PCC Mission Statement)
5. Loyalty to the College and its ideals (vide work of PCC Past Students)
6. Great tradition of outstanding, professional and helpful teachers (vide history of PCC).[[9]](http://www.faithwebsites.com/pro/admin/formatted_text/formatted_text_new.cfm?textid=102654&detailid=182324&pageid=72504&memberid=1090" \l "_edn9" \o ")

PCC has certainly grown to be a great school since I first visited it in August, 1959. When Sir Christopher Wren, architect and builder of St Paul’s Cathedral in London, died, the following epitaph was placed over his tomb in the crypt of the cathedral, ‘Si monumentum requires, circumspice’. Roughly translated, this means, ‘if you wish to see a monument, look around you!’ One could say the same about Presentation College, Chaguanas. We send PCC our warmest greetings and say, ‘Happy Golden Jubilee!

**ROLE OF PRESENTATION BROTHERS IN WEST INDIES REMEMBERED**

Brother Matthew Feheney has published an authoritative new book on Catholic education in Trinidad and Tobago. The book is entitled, "Catholic Education in Trinidad and Tobago. The Twentieth Century."

The book has been welcomed by His Grace Dr Edward Gilbert, Archbishop of Port of Spain. Copies will be distributed among Catholic schools and colleges throughout the archdiocese in the coming months.

The Presentation Brothers went to the British Caribbean in 1947 at the invitation of Archbishop Finbar Ryan, Dominican prelate from Cork. The Brothers operated five secondary schools in the islands: two in Trinidad and Tobago and one each in Grenada, St Lucia and Barbados.

Brother Matthew spent sixteen years in the archdiocese of Port of Spain, during which he was principal of both Presentation College San Fernando and Presentation College, Chaguanas. Both the present Prime Minister and his predecessor are past students of Presentation College, San Fernando.

The present volume compliments Brother Matthew's earlier publication, "Catholic Education in Trinidad in the Nineteenth Century" (Dublin: Four Courts, 2001), which is regarded as a seminal study of Catholic education in the area.

**CARIBBEAN RECOLLECTIONS; PRESENTATION BROTHERS REMEMBERED. (2009)**

In September, 2009, the past students of Presentation College, San Fernando, Trinidad, published a book by Brother Matthew, entitled, Caribbean Recollections; Presentation Brothers Remembered. This book contains short biographical sketches of 26 Presentation Brothers who served in the British Caribbean and who are now deceased.

Mr Joel Edwards, treasurer of the past students association, was one of the principal organisers of this project. Brother Matthew declined to accept any financial return for the book, suggesting, instead, that profits go towards the charities being supported by the Presentation Past Students Association of San Fernando.

Congregation of Presentation Brothers

The **Congregation of Presentation Brothers** is an international [Catholic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) [congregation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_(Catholic)#Congregations_as_a_historical_category_of_religious_institutes) of [laymen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laity)founded in 1802 in [Waterford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterford), [Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland), by a local businessman, [Edmund Ignatius Rice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ignatius_Rice), now[Blessed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatification) [Edmund Ignatius Rice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ignatius_Rice).

Presentation Brothers live and work in Ireland, England, USA, Canada, Ghana, Switzerland, Slovakia, St. Lucia and Grenada with about 100 Brothers throughout these countries.

The Brothers take three promises—poverty, chastity and obedience—and live together in small groups called "communities".

The motto of the congregation was adopted from that of the Jesuits: "[Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ad_Majorem_Dei_Gloriam)" or "For the Greater Glory of God". Brothers bear the initials F.P.M. (Fratres Presentationis Mariae).

The expressed mission of the Presentation Brothers is to "form Christ in the Young" and traditionally they have worked to achieve this through education. Today Presentation Brothers work in a wider range of ministries including with the homeless, elderly, disadvantaged youth and the Roma people.

In 2007 the Presentation Brothers opened new missions in Slovakia and Nigeria and an Advocacy Office for the poor in Geneva.

## History

Edmund Rice’s founding charism[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Brothers#cite_note-1) gave birth to two congregations: the Congregation of Presentation Brothers and the [Congregation of Christian Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers).

In the early days, when Edmund first began to attract followers to his way of life, these formed themselves into a small group of companions. They lived together in community and began to follow an adaptation of the [Presentation Sisters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Sisters)’ Rule. The Holy See had already approved of this Rule when Edmund and his followers began to use their adaptation of it in 1809 to guide their first faltering steps along the path of religious life.

The granting of the Apostolic Brief in 1820, allowed the infant Congregation to become an Pontifical Institute - a defining moment for all of the early brothers. The majority accepted the Brief and went on to become the [Congregation of Christian Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers). Today there are Irish Christian Brothers in 17 different countries.

A few Brothers, notably Michael Augustine Riordan, continued to live by the Presentation Rule. They continued as the Presentation Brothers and became a Pontifical Institute in 1889.

Like the Irish Christian Brothers, the Presentation Brothers have followed the missionary example of the great Irish missionaries Brendan and Colmcille, responding as they believe Edmund Rice would have, to different needs as they encounter them in different regions and different circumstances.

The main foundations have been: U.S.A. 1843; England 1876; Canada 1910; West Indies 1946; Ghana 1968; Peru 1969; Geneva 2007; Nigeria 2007; Slovakia 2007.

## Headquarters

The Presentation Brothers' Generalate is located at Mount St. Joseph in [Cork](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cork_(city)), [Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland). The current Congregation Leader is Brother Martin Kenneally FPM.

## Provinces

The congregation is divided into three Provinces: - Anglo-Irish Province (Ireland, England, Slovakia, Switzerland) - Our Lady of the Americas Province (Canada, USA, St. Lucia, Grenada, Trinidad) - Ghana Province (Ghana, Nigeria)

## Schools

* [Presentation Brothers College, Cork](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Brothers_College,_Cork), Ireland
* [Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Col%C3%A1iste_an_Spioraid_Naoimh), Cork, Ireland
* [Presentation College, Bray](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_College,_Bray), Wicklow, Ireland
* [Brebeuf College School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brebeuf_College_School), Toronto, Canada
* [Coláiste Chríost Rí](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Col%C3%A1iste_Chr%C3%ADost_R%C3%AD), Cork, Ireland
* Coláiste Mhuire, Cobh, Ireland
* [Presentation College, San Fernando](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_College,_San_Fernando), [Trinidad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinidad)
* Presentation College, Grenada
* [Presentation College Chaguanas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_College_Chaguanas), [Trinidad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinidad)
* Presentation Secondary Miltown, Kerry, Ireland
* [Scoil Chríost Rí](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Scoil_Chr%C3%ADost_R%C3%AD&action=edit&redlink=1), Cork

## Former schools

* Presentation College, [Reading](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading,_Berkshire), England – now [Elvian School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elvian_School), itself later closed (summer 2010)
* Presentation High School—Montebello, Quebec \*\* now the Auberge Montebello Inn
* Verdun Catholic High School — Verdun, Quebec
* Daniel O'Connell School—Montreal, Quebec
* Sacred Heart Elementary School—Prince George, British Columbia
* Presentation College - St. John, Barbados

## Notable alumni

* [Michael Bond](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Bond), author of Paddington Bear series (Reading)
* [Joseph Boyden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Boyden), author of "Three Day Road" and "Through Black Spruce" (Brebeuf)
* [Marc Kielburger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marc_Kielburger), co-founder of Free the Children and Leaders Today (Brebeuf)
* [John McGahern](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McGahern), author (Presentation College Leitrim)
* [Patrick Manning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Manning), Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago (Pres San Fernando)
* [Cillian Murphy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cillian_Murphy), actor (Pres Cork)
* Cardinal [Cormac Murphy-O'Connor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cormac_Murphy-O%27Connor), former Archbishop of Westminster and former President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (Reading & Cork)
* [Sean O'Faolain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sean_O%27Faolain), author and Short Story writer (Pres Cork)
* [Michael O'Leary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_O%27Leary_(politician)), Irish Tánaiste and former leader of the Irish Labour Party (Pres Cork)
* [Mike Oldfield](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Oldfield), musician (Reading)
* [Joseph Kelly](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Joseph_Kelly_(publisher)&action=edit&redlink=1), CEO and Editor, The Universe Catholic weekly (Reading)
* [Basdeo Panday](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basdeo_Panday), former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago (Pres San Fernando)
* Numerous Irish rugby players including [Ronan O'Gara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronan_O%27Gara), [Peter Stringer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Stringer) and Irish Coach [Declan Kidney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declan_Kidney).
* Stephen Pickford, host/Executive Producer of the Travel World Radio Show (Montebello)
* [Xavier Hervé](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Xavier_Herv%C3%A9&action=edit&redlink=1), President of Mechtronix (Montebello)
* [André Laurin](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Andr%C3%A9_Laurin&action=edit&redlink=1), President of BrainBank Inc. (Montebello)

# Our History

### The Beginning

In 1802, Edmund Rice was a rich merchant in Waterford living in comfortable circumstances. But he was conscious of the hardship suffered by poorer people.   
  
Realising the effects deprivation had especially on the young people of the city he responded to their needs.

Following the death of his young wife Mary and having cared for his disabled daughter (also Mary) he gave up the comforts of wealth and established a school in a converted stable.

A few companions joined him in the work. They lived in the loft above the classroom praying together, sharing their lives and possessions in mutual support as a community.

In 1808, following the example of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters, Edmund and his companions took vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, and devoted themselves to the education of poor boys. At this time they were known as the Society of the Presentation.

Nano Nagle, a pioneer in the provision of free education to the youth of the city of Cork, founded the Presentation Sisters in 1775.

As Presentation Brothers we have a special devotion to Mary the Mother of Jesus. We honour Mary in her presentation of her own life to God and in her presentation of Jesus to the world  
  
Development – Two branches of Edmund’s Family

Edmund Rice’s founding charism gave birth to two congregations, the Congregation of Christian Brothers and the Congregation of Presentation Brothers.

In the early days, when Edmund first began to attract followers to his way of life, they formed themselves into a small group of companions. They lived together in community, and began to follow an adaptation of the Presentation Sisters’ Rule. The Holy See had already approved of this Rule when Edmund and his followers began to use their adaptation of it in 1809 to guide their first faltering steps along the path of religious life.  
The granting of the Apostolic Brief in 1820, allowed the infant Congregation to become an Apostolic Institute - a defining moment for all of the early brothers. The majority accepted the Brief and went on to become the Congregation of Christian Brothers. Today there are Christian Brothers in 17 different countries.  
A few Brothers, notably Michael Augustine Riordan, continued to live by the Presentation Rule. They continued as the Presentation Brothers and became an Apostolic Institute in 1889.

Like the Christian Brothers the Presentation Brothers have followed the missionary example of the great Irish missionaries, Brendan and Colmcille responding as they believe Edmund Rice would to different needs as they encounter them in different regions and different circumstances.  
  
U.S.A. 1843  
England 1876  
Canada 1910  
West Indies 1946  
Ghana 1968  
Peru 1969  
Geneva 2007  
Nigeria 2007  
Slovakia 2007

### The Present

Throughout the two hundred years since the Congregation was founded, membership was predominantly Irish. The Brothers relied to a great extent on vocations from Ireland for the development of the Congregation overseas.

The number of Irish Brothers is now decreasing while there is an increase in the membership from other countries. At present there are Brothers from Ireland, Ghana, Canada, the United States, Trinidad, Grenada, Nigeria, Liberia, England and Pakistan.

The policy of the Brothers is ‘to do nothing on our own that we can do collaboratively’ (Gen. Chapter Statement ’99). This is expressed in the many lay groups with whom the Brothers share their vision and mission as well as the collaboration with the Christian Brothers and Presentation Sisters in what has become known as the 'Nagle-Rice Family'.  
From very humble beginnings in Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century the vision of Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice has grown and is being lived throughout the world in new and dynamic ways at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

### Looking Forward

At the start of the third millennium the followers of Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice Family are again working in close collaboration.

The spirit of partnership between the Presentation Sisters, Presentation Brothers, the Christian Brothers is in evidence in joint programs in the areas of Vocations, renewal programs, retirement courses.

Collaboration is much in evidence in programmes such as SHARE, CLEO, ERA, CARE and Communio Edmund Rice.  
People inspired by the vision of Nano and Edmund are today living out in a new way what had its humble beginnings in Ireland towards the end of the eighteenth century.

The Presentation Brothers now work with the Christian Brothers in [Edmund Rice International](http://www.edmundriceinternational.org/)at the United Nations in Geneva.

# Congregation of Christian Brothers

The **Congregation of Christian Brothers** (officially, in [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin): **Congregatio Fratrum Christianorum**; members of the order use the post-nominal "CFC")[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-1) is a worldwide religious community within the [Catholic Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church), founded by [Blessed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatification) [Edmund Rice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ignatius_Rice).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-autogenerated1-2) The **Christian Brothers**, as they are commonly known, chiefly work for the evangelisation and education of youth, but are involved in many ministries, especially with the poor. Their first school was opened in [Waterford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterford), [Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland), in 1802.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-autogenerated1-2) Br Philip Pinto is the current Congregation Leader of the Christian Brothers,[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-3) and head of its Congregational Leadership Team that is based in[Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome). At the time of its foundation, though much relieved from the harshest of the [Penal Laws](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penal_Laws)by the Irish Parliament's Relief Acts, some discrimination against Catholics remained throughout the newly created United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland pending full [Catholic Emancipation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Emancipation) in 1829.

This congregation is sometimes confused with the [Brothers of the Christian Schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brothers_of_the_Christian_Schools), or "De La Salle Christian Brothers," founded by [Saint Jean-Baptiste de la Salle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Jean-Baptiste_de_la_Salle) in France. This is a completely separate [religious institute](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_institute). Rice's congregation is sometimes called the **Irish Christian Brothers**.

## Formation[

At the turn of the seventeenth century, [Waterford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waterford) merchant [Edmund Rice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ignatius_Rice) considered travelling to[Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) to join a religious institute, possibly the [Augustinians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustinians). Instead, with the support of Dr.[Thomas Hussey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hussey_(bishop)), Catholic [Bishop](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop) of the [Diocese of Waterford and Lismore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese_of_Waterford_and_Lismore_(Roman_Catholic)), he decided to found a religious community dedicated to teaching disadvantaged youth.

The first school, on Waterford's New Street, was a converted stable and opened in 1802, with a second school opening in Stephen Street soon after to cater for increasing enrolments. Two men from his hometown of [Callan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Callan,_County_Kilkenny), Thomas Grosvenor and Patrick Finn, soon arrived to aid Rice in his makeshift schools, with the intention of living the life of [lay brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lay_brothers). In the same year, Rice used proceeds from the sale of his victualling business to begin building a community house and school on land provided by the diocese. Bishop Hussey opened the new complex, christened “[Mount Sion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Sion_Primary_School)” on June 7, 1803, and pupils were transferred to the new school building the following year.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-Normoyle-4) The reputation of the school spread and across the next few years several men sought to become “Michaels”.

On 15 August 1808, seven men, including Edmund Rice, took religious promises under Bishop[John Power](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=John_Power_(bishop)&action=edit&redlink=1) of Waterford. Following the example of Nano Nagle's Presentation Sisters, they were called "[Presentation Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Brothers)".[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-5) This was one of the first congregations of men to be founded in Ireland and one of the few founded in the Church by a layman.

Houses were soon opened in [Carrick-on-Suir](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrick-on-Suir), [Dungarvan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dungarvan), and in 1811, in [Cork](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cork_(city)). In 1812 the [Archbishop of Dublin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archbishop_of_Dublin_(Roman_Catholic)) established a community in the nation's capital and by 1907 there were ten communities in [Dublin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dublin), with in excess of 6,000 pupils. The schools included [primary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_school), [secondary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_school) and [technical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocational_education) schools, along with [orphanages](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orphanage) and a school for the deaf. A community was founded in[Limerick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limerick) in 1816, followed by establishments in several of Ireland's principal towns.

The [Holy See](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_See) formally established the congregation in 1820. This, too, was an unusual event, since the Christian Brothers were the first Irish congregation of men approved by a charter from [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope).

Some brothers in Cork chose to remain under the original Presentation rule and continued to be known as Presentation Brothers, a separate congregation but also recognising Edmund Rice as its Founder. <http://www.childabusecommission.com/rpt/>

The congregation of Irish Christian Brothers spread to [Liverpool](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool) and other parts of [England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England). Brother [Ambrose Treacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambrose_Treacy) established a strong presence in [Melbourne, Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne,_Australia) in 1868, and in 1875 in [Brisbane, Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brisbane,_Australia) and in 1876 a school was commenced in [Dunedin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kavanagh_College), [New Zealand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand). In 1875 a school was opened in [St. John’s, Newfoundland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._John%E2%80%99s,_Newfoundland). In 1878 the Brothers were introduced to the then [Crown colony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crown_colony) of [Gibraltar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibraltar). In 1886 the Pope requested that they consider setting up in [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India) and a province of the congregation was established there. In 1900 came the invitation to establish houses in [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) and in 1906 schools were established in [New York City](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City).

These new ventures were not always immediately successful. Two brothers had been sent to Gibraltar to establish an institute in 1835. However, despite initial successes they left in August 1837 on account of disagreements with the local priests.[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-6) However the school eventually flourished supplying education to the twentieth century. The "[Line Wall College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Brothers_School,_Gibraltar)" was noted in 1930 for the education that it supplied to "well to do" children.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-7) Similarly, a mission to [Sydney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney), [Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia) in 1842 failed within a couple of years.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-8)

In 1940 [Iona College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iona_College_(New_York)) was founded in New York, as a Higher Education College,[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-9) facilitating poorer High School graduates to progress to a College education.

In 1955 [Stella Maris College (Montevideo)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stella_Maris_College_(Montevideo)) in [Uruguay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uruguay) was established, which became one of the leading schools in the country, but also became known for the accidental fame for the [Andes Flight Disaster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uruguayan_Air_Force_Flight_571) involving its alumni rugby team.

The Christian Brothers teacher training center has become the [Marino Institute for Education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marino_Institute_for_Education) which has trained lay teachers since 1972 and has offered degrees validated by the [University of Dublin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Dublin) since 1974. In 2012 [Trinity College Dublin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity_College_Dublin) became a co-trustee with the Brothers of the Institute.[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-10)

The Brothers' schools continue to be of many types, including primary, secondary and technical schools, orphanages and for the deaf. A number of these technical schools originally taught poor children trades such as carpentry and building skills for which they could progress to gain apprenticeships and employment. As the National School system and vocational schools developed in the Irish Republic, the Irish Christian Brothers became more concentrated on secondary education.

### Irish nationalism April 2010

The Irish Christian Brothers were strong supporters of Irish nationalism, the Irish Language revival and Irish sports. In most of their schools in Ireland [Gaelic football](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaelic_football) and [hurling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurling) were encouraged as opposed to other sports and there were even examples of boys being punished for playing [soccer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_Football). [Conor Cruise O'Brien](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conor_Cruise_O%27Brien) called them "the most indefatigable and explicit carriers" of the Catholic nation idea.[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-11)

### Publications by the Christian Brothers

In the absence of government devised text books that were inexpensive, the Christian brothers composed and published a number of text books which were used by their schools. Many of these were in the Irish language but also dealt with Mathematics and other subjects.

#### Textbooks

* *Irish History Reader*, Christian Brothers, M.H. Gill & Son, 1905.
* *Graiméar na Gaeidhilge*, Na Bráithre Críostaí, 1907.
* *Matamaitic na hArdteistiméireachta* Na Bráithre Críostaí, 1967.
* *Leaving Certificate Chemistry*, Christian Brothers Congregation, Folens, Dublin.
* *Leaving Certificate Physics*[translated from the Irish], Christian Brothers Congregation, Folens, Dublin, 1973.

#### Our Boys

*Our Boys* was a magazine format publication for boys by Christian Brothers and the Educational Company of Ireland. It was first published in September 1914, based on British *Boys Own* adventure comics, its content was cartoons and adventure stories in English and Irish. It had an overt Catholic and Irish Nationalist outlook, featuring Irish Legends, GAA figures, the Missions and Catholic juvenile organisations. The illustrator Gerrit van Gelderen contributed to the magazine. It was published up until the 1990s.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-12)

## Organisational structure of the Christian Brothers

Geographically, the Christian Brothers are divided into several [provinces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provinces) that encompass every inhabited continent. The brothers within each province work under the direction of a Province Leadership Team. In turn, the entire Congregation operates under the leadership of a Congregation Leadership Team that is based in [Rome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) (and led by the Congregation Leader). These provincial and congregational teams are elected on a 6-year basis at Congregation [chapters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chapter_(religion)).

Restructuring has taken place in the congregation to account for the changing needs, in particular the declining number of brothers in the developed world. The three provinces of North America (Canada, Eastern American, and Western American Province) restructured into the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers North America on 1 July 2005.[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-13) The provinces that cover [Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland), [England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England) and the Congregational Leadership Team in Rome combined into a single European province on May 5, 2007,[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-14) while the five provinces covering Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea combined into one Oceania province on October 1, 2007,[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-15) The English Province is a [registered charity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charitable_organization).[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-16) The Dublin Headquarters are in the grounds of [Marino Institute of Education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marino_Institute_of_Education), Claremont, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9, Ireland.

A special community within this new European province will be based in [Geneva](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva), [Switzerland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Switzerland), working to establish an [NGO](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NGO) known as[Edmund Rice International](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Edmund_Rice_International&action=edit&redlink=1). The purpose of such an organisation is to gain what is known as a "general consultative status" with the[United Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations). "This position allows groups the opportunity to challenge systemic injustice and to engage in advocacy work with policy makers on behalf of people who are made poor." As well as including Christian Brothers from provinces all over the world, members of the [Presentation Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Brothers) will also have a presence within this community.[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-17)

Edmund Rice Development is a faith-based Non-governmental Organisation with charity status in [Ireland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland). Based in [Dublin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dublin), Edmund Rice Development was established in 2009, to formalise the fundraising efforts of the developing world projects for the Christian Brothers globally and received its charitable status in 2009. Funding raised by the charity is directed mainly to 9 countries in [Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa), where The Christian Brothers work on mission in development: [Ghana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghana), [Kenya](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenya), [Liberia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberia), [Sierra Leone](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Leone), [South Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Africa), [Sudan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sudan), [Tanzania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanzania), [Zambia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zambia), and[Zimbabwe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zimbabwe). Additional funds are also raised for similar work in [South America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_America) ([Argentina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argentina), [Bolivia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolivia), [Paraguay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraguay), [Peru](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peru) and [Uruguay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uruguay)) and[India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India).

### Canada

In 1987, men came forward to say that when they were being raised in [Mount Cashel Orphanage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Cashel_Orphanage) in St. John's [Newfoundland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newfoundland_(island)), from the 1950s until 1970s, they had suffered physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and that when the [Archdiocese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archdiocese) became aware of the abuse, had quietly removed brothers who were guilty of these acts, but took no further action.

### Ireland

In Ireland the Congregation of the Christian Brothers published full-page advertisements in newspapers in March 1998, apologizing to former pupils who had been ill-treated whilst in their care. This advertising campaign expressed "deep regret" on behalf of the Christian Brothers and listed telephone lines which former pupils could ring if they needed help.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-18) In 2003 the Congregation brought a case against the [Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commission_to_Inquire_into_Child_Abuse) seeking to prevent the Commission from naming brothers acccused of child abuse. This case was lost in the High Court, but the congregation appealed to the Supreme Court. This appeal was later dropped, when the Commission agreed not to name brothers.[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-19) In May 2009 a report was issued by an independent government commission on [child abuse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_abuse) committed on thousands of children in residential care institutions run by various [religious institutes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_institute) for the [Irish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland) [state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state).[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-20) This report found that sexual abuse of boys in institutions run by the Brothers was common. In response, the Irish [province](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecclesiastical_province) issued a pledge to pay 161 million [euros](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro) toward a fund set up to compensate victims of such abuse in both their institutions and those run by other religious institutes, both male and female.

### United States

Such abuse was not limited to Ireland. According to the Chicago-Sun Times, in 1998 Brother Robert Brouillette was arrested in Joliet, Illinois, for indecent solicitation of a child.[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-Brouillette1-21) In 2002, a civil lawsuit was filed in Cook County, Illinois, against Brother Brouillette for sexual assault against a 21-year-old man.[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-Brouillette2-22)

### Australia

Australia has also seen such abuse. Convicted sex-offenders in Australia include Brother Robert Best, who taught at Catholic primary and secondary schools in Ballarat, Box Hill and Geelong (all in Victoria, Australia) between the 1960s and 1980s. He has been convicted by a jury and has pleaded guilty to more than 40 child sex offences against dozens of students, some as young as eight years old.[[23]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-Best-23) Robert Best was sentenced to fourteen years and nine months jail on August 8, 2011. Many of his victims were in court for the sentencing and shouted at him as he was led away.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-Best2-24)

In May 2013, the Christian Brothers admitted to Victoria's parliamentary inquiry into child abuse they did what they could to defend members accused of sexual assault against children. They admitted to hiring a private investigator to follow one of the Brother Robert Bests's victims. They spent nearly $1 million Australian dollars defending Best, as well as hundreds of thousands to defend other members also accused of rape.[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-25)

### England

### In December 2012, the Christian Brothers school St Ambrose college, Altrincham, Greater Manchester, was implicated in a child sex abuse case involving teaching staff carrying out alleged acts of abuse both on and off school grounds.[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregation_of_Christian_Brothers#cite_note-26)

## Notable Christian Brothers

* [John Philip Holland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Philip_Holland), inventor of the motor powered submarine, who had been a Christian Brother as a young man
* [Paul Francis Keaney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Keaney)
* [Paul Nunan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Nunan)
* [Blessed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatification) [Edmund Ignatius Rice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Ignatius_Rice), founder of the Christian Brothers and the [Presentation Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_Brothers)
* [Michael Paul Riordan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Paul_Riordan), second Superior-General of the congregation
* [Patrick Ambrose Treacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Ambrose_Treacy), leader of the first Australian community of Christian Brothers

## Former pupils

The Christian Brothers have taught many notable persons.

* See [List of alumni of the Christian Brothers worldwide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_alumni_of_the_Christian_Brothers_worldwide)

# *What is a vocation?*

"Find a job you love and you will never have to work a day again in your life”

That's pretty good advice! And it has stood the test of time. Those words come from Confucius in 500 BC!

Most people who hear it appreciate the wisdom that it contains.

Rather than search for a 'job you love' it's much more fruitful to discern instead your vocation in life.

A vocation in life is more than just the "job you love". A vocation is a call from God.

But God’s call is not something which can be heard with our ears. And it is unlikely that there will be a bolt of lightning from on high.

Instead, we discover our vocation through prayer and through a deep awareness of the presence of God in our lives, especially in ordinary daily events.

Figuring out one’s vocation in life is a tough task but it is the key to answering the question, “what will I do with my life? ”

[Discovering your Vocation](http://www.presentationbrothers.net/vocations/discovering-your-vocation.html) provides tips on the process which helps one to discern a vocation.

## Vocation: Witness, Love, Service

All Christians are called to holiness. At our baptism we are called to witness to the Gospel. We must then decide how this vocation is expressed in terms of how we use our God-given gifts and talents to serve others. This service of God and of others can be expressed in a variety of ways, e.g. teaching, nursing and it can be expressed through married life or celibate life.

## Words of Wisdom

“If Jesus calls you, do not be afraid to respond to Him with generosity. Trust in Him and you will not be disappointed!”  
*Pope Benedict XVI*

“When you wonder about the mystery of yourself, look to Christ, who gives you the meaning of life.

When you wonder what it means to be a mature person, look to Christ, who is the fullness of humanity.

And when you wonder about your role in the future of the world, look to Christ.”

*- Blessed Pope John Paul II*

# *What is a Brother?*

## *Religious Brothers* A reflection on vocation, a call to ministry.

While it is true that one of us can ever fully appreciate nor understand another person’s specific vocation, it seems the call to religious brotherhood is the most misunderstood of all.

The most common misperception of a brother is that he is simply one who is “a step away from priesthood”, or worse one who “didn’t quite make it to the priesthood”. Perhaps it is just an unfortunate by-product of a hierarchical church structure which causes us to rank vocations. It is also a terrible injustice to the uniqueness of each vocation – an an injustice to those who have responded to the Lord’s particular call to them.

Brothers can be found doing virtually every ministry which Christians perform: evangelisation, catechesis, education, the works of mercy and service to those in need. Brothers are essential members of many pastoral staffs, hospital and nursing home teams, diocesan office staffs. Brothers live and minister among us in cities, suburbs, and rural areas; many labour in foreign mission lands.

## Community life

One of the greatest challenges to living the vocation of a religious brother is the integral commitment to life in community. Brothers find themselves sharing a common life with a variety of men of various ages, cultures, ethnic, economic and social backgrounds. This diversity becomes one of the richest gifts which religious brothers bring to the Church and to their ministries.

Religious brothers stand among us as powerful witnesses to a community life reminiscent of the early Church. Whatever class distinction and privileges may have existed prior to their entering the brotherhood, they share all things in common, each one being responsible for the needs of the rest.

The question is not, then, when will the brothers finally become priests? But when will the rest of us become more like brothers.

*Carole M Eipers D. Min., is Vice-President, Executive Director of Catechetics for William H. Sandler, Inc., New York. The reflection is part of a VOCATION, A CALL TO MINISTRY series that appears on the second Sunday of each month.*

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# *Becoming a Brother*

The process for becoming a Presentation Brother is taken slowly and carefully. The first step is usually a chat with the Vocations Director (Click here to contact a Vocations Director [prescall@eircom.net](mailto:prescall@eircom.net)). This is an opportunity to ask questions and to learn more about the Brothers. If you are still interested, then the following process begins-

**Accompaniment:**  
This is a series of regular meetings with the Vocations Director over several months. During each meeting the Vocations Director will guide you through a process of discernment. This enables you to figure out what your vocation might be. The process may also involve a weekend visit to a Brothers’ house to experience the life of a religious community.

**Candidacy (1 year):**  
This year is usually spent living in a Brothers’ community sharing in the prayer and community life. The candidate may keep his regular job during this period.

**Novitiate (2 years):**

This is the stage at which one “joins the Brothers”. The novice becomes increasingly familiar with the life and mission of the Congregation.

**Temporary Profession (6 years):**  
The novice now takes three vows (poverty, celibacy and obedience), one year at a time. This continues usually for six years.

**Final Profession:**  
At this point the Brother makes the decision to take these vows for life. It’s similar to the life-long promise a man and woman make in marriage.

# *Presentation Brothers*

## Who are the Presentation Brothers?

The Presentation Brothers are an international Roman Catholic Congregation of religious brothers working in several countries.

We are men who believe that Jesus Christ is calling us to serve him and his people in a radical way. We live our baptismal promises through sharing all that we earn and by devoting our lives to the service of people. We take three vows; chastity, poverty and obedience and we live together in small groups called communities where we support one another and live out this challenging lifestyle.

## What do the Brothers do?

We are teachers, social workers, pastoral workers, chaplains. Regardless of the work we do, it is all “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”- for the greater glory of God.

## Where do the Brothers work?

Today, we work in Ghana, Nigeria, West Indies (St. Lucia & Grenada), USA, Canada, Ireland, England, Slovakia and Geneva.

## Why should somebody join the Brothers today?

A man joins the Presentation Brothers in response to a call from Christ (this is called a vocation). He dedicates his life to God (just like Blessed Edmund Rice). He gives of himself so that others may live more wholesome lives and in doing so shows that all men and women are brothers and sisters of Christ.

## Our Name

We take our name from the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple.  
Mary, the Mother of God, was a Jew and, following tradition, was taken by her parents, Anne and Joachim, to the Temple at a young age. Mary presented her life to God. In the same way, we, Presentation Brothers, try to present God to the world in which we live.

## Our Founder

The Presentation Brothers were founded in Waterford by a businessman, Edmund Rice, in 1802. Edmund had been married. However, his wife Mary Elliott, died while giving birth to their only child. After his wife’s death Edmund drew closer to God in prayer.

After his wife’s death, he decided to devote his life entirely to God. He gathered a number of men around him and together they opened a school in a converted horse stable. Edmund’s goal was to provide a Catholic education to the youngsters on the streets of the city. The Brothers have continued this mission for 200 years.

May 5th is Blessed Edmund Rice’s Feast Day.

## Why “Presentation” Brothers?

Edmund Rice chose the name “Presentation Brothers” to honour the “Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary”. This was a Jewish tradition in which Mary was brought to the Temple by her parents, Anne and Joachim. Mary presented her life to God and, later, presented Jesus to the world. In the same way the Brothers try to present Jesus to the world in which they live. The Feast of the Presentation of Mary, November 21st, is a day of celebration for the entire Presentation Family.

## What do the symbols represent?

These are the emblems of the Congregation. The crest depicts the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple. She is accompanied by her parents. The Latin words along the edge mean “Symbol of the Brothers of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary”. “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam” written on the bottom means “For the Greater Glory of God”.

The second emblem we use sums up the mission of the Brothers in the statement, “Forming Christ in the Young”

**VOCATIONS (Christian Brothers) This can be adapted for Presentation Brothers**

The story of Blessed Edmund Rice has inspired generations of people across the world. Among the values that we cherish from his tradition are his generosity, his courage, his humanity, his love of God’s word in Scripture, his devotion to the Mother of God, his practical reaching out to the poor and oppressed, and his absolute trust in God’s providence.**The Joy of Brotherhood.**  
For us Christian Brothers community living is a central part of our identity. We live together the vowed life of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience in a way that is life-giving for us. We pray together to Jesus our Brother, and we share our cares and joys. As members of a community we carry our gifts to others. We are enriched as the lives of others touch our own.  
  
**We experience the love of God in our lives.**  
We meet God in our community prayer, and in our personal prayer and reflection. We experience the love and care of God in the ordinary and extraordinary events of our lives. Like Edmund we trust ourselves to his providence.  
  
**We want to share our search for God and our experience.**  
The search for God is an important element in the lives of many young people. Christian Brothers are travelling on this journey, and we want to accompany others on their search for a spiritual life.  
  
**We have a strong commitment to justice.**  
Human rights advocacy is a new ministry of the Christian Brothers and reflects a new understanding of global mission. Right across the world young people and children are the victims of injustice and poverty. Many are abused. All are in need of compassion, services and a safe place where they can speak of and about their situation. When Edmund Rice looked out the window in Waterford he saw the children on the street; today he would see the children of the world.  
  
Eco-justice is a new area if concern for us as we try to bring an awareness of our responsibilities as stewards of the world around us.  
 **We are on the side of the poor and disadvantaged.**  
Since the time of Blessed Edmund the Brothers have directed their personnel and resources to educating the poor, and our school immersion projects have opened the eyes and hearts of Irish students and teachers to the realities of poverty in Africa and India. Our justice offices throughout the world stand up for the rights of the oppressed.  
  
**We empower people through education.**  
Education was the means Edmund Rice used to transform the children of his day. Since then it has been the method of “helping people to help themselves.”

The Brothers have been involved in all levels of education for over two hundred years, and in thirty-five countries. Recently the foundation of “Life-centres” in urban areas has shown the recognition that normal school structures do not always work.

Edmund Rice Network Europe

**Brothers for the 21st Century**

When Edmund Rice contemplated the Waterford of 1802 and saw the plight of the poor, his response was daring, bold and imaginative. He established an education system for poor boys where none existed. It was a creative response to a crying need. Over the past two centuries, generations of brothers and their co-workers have build upon Edmund's dream.  
  
Nevertheless, there has been a growing awareness that while we have been good at replicating Edmund's response, we have lost something of his boldness and daring. In the world of young people, new needs have emerged to which the congregation has been slow to respond. Galvanised by recent Congregation Chapters, brothers have been encouraged to rediscover a splash of Edmund's boldness and daring.  
  
In Africa where the congregation has been growing steadily, the most obvious crying need is the scourge of HIV/Aids. The brothers have committed themselves to address this appalling tragedy through a variety of initiatives.  
  
In South America, the crying need is the countless numbers of homeless children. Many of these unfortunates end up in squalid jails with no provision for their welfare. The brothers have responded by involvement in juvenile prison ministry, and by initiating projects for the education and care of street children.  
  
In India, the brothers have traditionally worked in prestigious private schools. In more recent years, the brothers have changed the focus of their ministry, and all of their recent openings have been for the benefit of the Dalits, the untouchables, in the tribal villages.  
  
Working with the poor, it soon becomes apparent that unjust structures ensure that the poor remain poor. Brothers have learned that advocacy on behalf of those who have no voice is an important dimension of their ministry. Recently, the Christian and the Presentation Brothers have established an NGO called Edmund Rice International. Associated with ERI is a community of four brothers who live in Geneva, and work in advocacy at the United Nations.  
  
Brothers have heard the crying need of the earth itself, and appreciate the importance of advocacy on behalf of the whole earth community. A number of Eco-justice centres have been opened to raise awareness in the human community of the consequences of our profligacy and wasteful use of resources.  
  
Br. Mark McDonnell

**Edmund Rice and the Brothers Today**

On 15 August 1808 Edmund Rice and six companions dedicated themselves by vow to God's service. The rule adopted was that of the Presentation Sisters, approved by the Pope in 1805. From then on many of the Brothers’ establishments were referred to as Presentation Monasteries, and the Brothers as Presentation Brothers.

Between 1802 and 1820 schools had been opened in Waterford, Carrick-on-Suir, Dungarvan, Cork, Dublin, Cappoquin, Limerick and Thurles. The Brothers in Cork and Thurles were volunteers from these cities, who were trained in Waterford, but returned home and made profession of vows to their diocesan Bishop. Like the Presentation Convents, the community was subject directly to the Bishop of the Diocese.  
  
 This system was not convenient for Edmund as his vision was to open schools “in all parts of the kingdom.” Transferring Brothers from one diocese to another was a complex process. However, while remaining autonomous, all communities looked to Edmund Rice and Waterford for guidance and direction.  
  
 In 1820 Pope Pius Vll approved the rule of the Religious Brothers. Its principal feature was that all the Brothers in all dioceses would be directly obedient to the Superior General. However, when the time came in 1822 to accept the new rule several Brothers and several communities declined to accept the new system. The principal school to opt out was in Cork.

The Presentation Brothers saw the organisational benefits enjoyed by the Christian Brothers of having Papal approval and they applied to Rome for similar approval which was given in 1889 and a Superior General was elected. The immediate result was the opening of new schools in Cork and Birr and further expansion followed in Ireland, England and worldwide.

In recent times, the Christian Brothers and Presentation Brothers are jointly involved in several new projects. These include the new development and the community at Mount Sion; the Advocacy & justice Office in Geneva; the promotion of devotion to their Founder; Blessed Edmund Rice; formation and retraining programmes like Trasna and Tóir; and in Edmund Rice Camps for needy children in Ireland. Both Congregations now have joint trusteeship of the Edmund Rice Centres in Callan and Waterford.

Today the Presentation Brothers live and work in Ireland, England, Canada, the United States of America, Peru, the West Indies and Ghana. Blessed Edmund Rice is honoured in the Mardyke in Cork where a special garden, honouring the women associated with him, has been developed.