



CHRISTIAN BROTHERS
OCEANIA PROVINCE

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We Acknowledge the Traditional custodians who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Reflection for the Anniversary of the Christian Brothers Arriving in Melbourne in November, 1868



Show Me A Dreamer

Those who lose dreaming are lost. –Aboriginal proverb

The kind of dreams we have determine the quality of our lives. The problem is not that we don't dream. The problem is that we seldom dream high enough.

What we dream about we will surely get—or at least some pale facsimile of it. What is important is not getting the dream but being able to appraise it once it is within reach. To dream without being willing to do something ourselves to make the dream come true dooms us to a life that never comes to fruit.



When we stop pursuing a dream before the dream is clearly impossible, we fail to pursue our own best development. Then we have to ask what it is that is really blocking us: fear, insecurity, lack of initiative or lack of faith?

What we are inclined to call in our realistic old age “the dreams of youth” may be the saddest commentary a person can make on the state of the human soul. Dreams don't die in youth; they are simply abandoned there for the sake of a deceit we call “realism.” Dreams are not only for the young. Dreams make every stage of life the great adventure it is meant to be.

The nice thing about a dream is that we never get exactly what we set out to achieve—which means that there are always things left over to pursue when the journey of life goes dark. Not to have a dream for tomorrow, for next year, for life is to abandon myself not simply to chance but to life without a rudder. Show me a dreamer and I'll show you one of God's heartbeats for the human race.

– from Aspects of the Heart: The Many Paths to A Good Life by Joan Chittister

Excerpts from address given by Br Edmund Garvey speaking to the Brothers for the 150 anniversary of the first community in Melbourne.

As an Irish man, and as a Christian Brother, in spite of what the holy books used to say, I feel very proud of what my fellow countrymen and Brothers brought to this country all those years ago and the many others who followed them.

It is worth pondering their journey and their voyage their facing and entry into the unknown

- ❖ *their capacity to learn, adapt and be adopted*
- ❖ *their openness to new relationships*
- ❖ *their capacities for fresh initiatives and creativity.*



Sculpture of the first four Brothers to arriving in Melbourne situated Parade College

They brought with them the inspiration, vision and faith of Blessed Edmund Rice which would lead and guide them to their commitment to the spread of the Christian Gospel here in Australia.

The focus of these early Brothers was clearly on establishing schools to offer a Christian education, particularly to the economically less well-off. This enterprise in its turn was to bring many people to a new sense of their dignity, worth and potentiality in this great country.

So it is right and fitting that we remember and honour these men. It is right to acknowledge our connection with them and our indebtedness to them.

In being open in this way, we can see that what has been is past, and will be made new; that what was wrong will be amended, corrected, and even forgiven, because the world of the past does exactly that – it passes – even as it waits.



Edmund at Ambrose's writing desk

They brought with them to my life and to the lives of my Brothers the faith and spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice, and the spirit of initiative, adventure and achievement of an Ambrose Treacy. So we are not just about past time, we are here and now carrying all of that giftedness with us. We, men and women gathered here, are the legacy alive today.

I cannot but think that Patrick Ambrose Treacy, Fursey Bodkin, Barnabas Lynch and Joseph Nolan were nothing other than prisoners of hope. The truth and realisation of that hope is incarnated and dotted all over Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and even further afield in our world today.

Prayer:

Spirit moving in our midst,

- ❖ Ambrose trusted deeply in YOU
– help us trust that it is your kingdom we care for and grow.
- ❖ He was a practical person
– help us to integrate action with contemplation
- ❖ He engaged in complicated and political discussion
– help us to listen to you in our discernment.
- ❖ His boundaries were the needs of the children and the reign of the Mystery we call God
– help us to put first the needs of our crying Earth and all its creatures.
- ❖ He used his gifts in the service of others
– help us to celebrate one another's gifts and to channel them well.
- ❖ He looked to the example of Mary
– help us to 'ponder deeply' as she so often did.
- ❖ He dreamt dreams others thought foolish
– may we be daring in our service of your kingdom of justice.
- ❖ He was truly Your servant
– help us to be servants of your Word.

*Glory be to the One,
whose power working
within us and around us,
can do infinitely more
than we can ask
or imagine!*

Amen!