



CHRISTIAN BROTHERS  
OCEANIA PROVINCE

# OCEANIA PROVINCE WEEKLY NEWS

VOL 2 | ISSUE 41

*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.*

## Br Edmund Garvey at Parade College, Bundoora

**RITUAL AT PARADE COLLEGE  
NEW OUTDOOR SCULPTURE – “THE WINDS OF PROVIDENCE”  
THE GIFT AND CHALLENGE OF BEING CHRISTIAN BROTHER TODAY  
Melbourne Australia  
Tuesday 20 November 2018**

I want to again express my thanks for the invitation and the opportunity to be with you at this time of celebration in the Oceania Province of the arrival of Brother Patrick Ambrose Treacy and his Brother companions into Australia in 1868.

I also want to acknowledge and congratulate you here at Parade College on marking this occasion. In particular, I congratulate you on commissioning the magnificent sculpture – “The Winds of Providence.”

Memory is an inherent part and quality of what makes us who we are. For me, what is crucial about memory is that it is made real – not in the past or in simple recall – but memory is made real in the present. 1868 joins 2018 and everything in between in creating our reality today.

The artist, Jenny Steiner, has given you a wonderful opportunity

here at Parade College to look, to feel, to listen, and to ponder the winds and the providence. The Providence speaks to me of the truth that everything about us is gift, freely, freely given to us. It reminds us to be wary of thinking that we are in control. We are to a certain extent, but only to the extent that we know and accept that we and all of life – all of life – are gift.

The winds – what do they do? Well scripture tells us that “they blow where they will.” Though I suspect that the scientists will tell us that even the winds are not their own controllers. Nevertheless, the winds speak to us of movement, of energy, of power, and of the breath that brings life. The winds are in, under and over, and through everything. We have to respect and trust the winds, even at times when we fear them. There is a lot to ponder here.

Brothers Treacy, Bodkin, Lynch and Nolan arrived in Australia in 1868. Brother Hughes arrived in 1870. These men were committed to their faith and religion and to providing education, particularly for those who could least afford it or provide it for themselves.

I want to thank all of the Brothers and their colleagues for the wonderful educational institutions which they established. Edmund Rice Education Australia continues with this legacy and with education in the Edmund Rice tradition. I believe that it was Australia which gave birth to Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders. This is a movement and an association which seeks to bring the benefits of the finest educational wisdom and experience to influence our schools across the world in the Christian tradition.

Times, as they always will, have changed. 1868 is not 2018. Probably most of us here have lived long enough to have experienced huge change in our own lifetime. The reality is that we are already able to glimpse changes that will create a difference that we have hardly begun to imagine.



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I will mention a few:

- Our planetary safety and future face enormous change
- The interface of infotech and biotech technologies will bring huge changes
- The impact of artificial intelligence is beginning to show signs of great change
- The movements of people across our planet will change us
- The growing economic and social inequalities between and among peoples will bring great changes
- Our attitude to the gift of life is causing deep change
- An increasing lack of development of our spiritual selves will make for great change

I know you could add many more.

It is into these emerging realities that we can begin to conceive of a place for a new and different Christian Brother in our world.

Though the changes will be great and the challenges will be massive – and let us not imagine that these were not great and massive in 1868 or in 1802 – the response is going to be different, just as the people who make the responses are different. Repeating the past is not an option, however attractive it might be.

The challenges and gifts of being a Brother today are summed up in responding to the change that is all around us. How does one be Christian and how does one be Brother in our world? And crucially, what will a Brother do?

I remember on one occasion trying to get past an immigration official in Canada, who was trying to be very thorough in his investigation of me. After some interrogation and frustration with my answers, in some desperation he finally said to me, “Yes, but what do you do – what do you as a Christian Brother do?” I am not sure I answered the question then, but I did gain entry to Canada.

The Christian Brother today in the so-called developed world is by and large an elderly man. The challenge and gift of age

- is to share wisdom and experience lightly
- to offer the wisdom as a gift that is energising and enlivening
- to communicate hope and to live in thankfulness
- to be alive to the best of our capacities
- to live life as fully as possible until the end comes
- to be generous and hospitable
- to share our faith in God, especially when asked

The younger Brother in the developing world has different challenges. I am totally convinced of the pressing and continuing need for an education that is inspired by the Gospel. I am also convinced that the Christian Brothers in our past discovered that it was the surest way of lifting people out of deprivation and poverty.

The gift and the challenge of being a Christian Brother today is to know, really to know, that life and its meaning are about something deep and profound. Developing a new Christian Brother belongs to the category of adventure and voyage that inspired the early Brothers who first came to Australia.



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The adventure and the voyage will be about exploring the changes in our world and finding ways of responding as a twenty-first century Jesus person on this planet.

This will involve searching and exploring again the mystery and the person of Jesus in the world today. A new and energised meaning for our shared humanity awaits to be explored in his vision. That gift of being human will need new expressions of fraternity and community if it is to survive.

I believe, as religious or consecrated people, Christian Brothers will explore how Gospel values will influence education in our schools and other centres, not in any sense as a control or power, but rather as an enlightening and freeing influence on science, art, literature, history, philosophy.

As religious people, belonging to a particular tradition, I believe that Christian Brothers will be people of inclusion and unity. All religions and cultures will benefit and flourish in atmospheres of respect and genuine participation. All peoples will be called on to realise and accept that we are all one. This was probably the heart of the vision of Jesus.

The Christian Brother of the future will have to be a person truly of the earth – a brother to the planet and everything upon it. The gift of life is a gift of the totality, and not just of the human. This will need people of open and generous spirit who treat everything from a blade of grass, or a desert pebble, with the respect that is due to the whole of life.

To be and to do all of this will require the Christian Brother to be an awakened personality and to combine a skilled, practical and professional ability with a deep sense of God as the one who is and abides in all that is. This is really the heart of the great adventure and the voyage of being a Christian Brother in the world today. Let me finish these few thoughts with the words of a wonderful American Trappist Monk, Fr. Thomas Keating, who died on the 25<sup>th</sup> October last:

*There seems to be an intent or a plan in creation to bring into manifestations, revelations of the Unknowable One that awaken in us the greater and greater capacity to love ..... God is more and more trying to move the human race to the next stage of consciousness ..... recognizing the truth that there is only one self ultimately, and this is God manifesting in us.*

I happen to think that this is truly the meaning and purpose of a life lived as a Christian Brother – because it is the meaning and purpose of all of life.

The gift and the challenge of being a Brother today – summary: to emerge in a new consciousness; out of a new enlightenment; within new relationships and re-energised communities; for a service and life of love; in and with God, being God's self-appearing.

Brother Edmund Garvey  
European Province Leader



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## Br Ambrose Treacy 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in Sydney

### A TOAST BY MICHAEL WALSH TO THE PIONEERING MEN OF B.I. EDMUND RICE IN AUSTRALASIA 25 NOVEMBER 2018

**CBHS Lewisham, is a very fitting place for us to remember and celebrate the pioneering men from Ireland, who in 1843 and 1868 brought the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice to Australasia.** This school named after St Joseph and founded by Ambrose, opened on December 12<sup>th</sup> 1891 with Br. Joseph Leo Murphy, who'd arrived in Australia just 2 years before, as its first superior of the community and headmaster.

It is here also you see **the only remaining building Ambrose Treacy built in Sydney** and, in addition, incorporated in a section of the school fronting the Boulevard is a part of "Ormley" the house he purchased for the Brothers in 1899. It is also a college which still has a Christian Brother as Principal. Thank you Paul for generously hosting us.

**The missions headed by Br Stephen Carroll in 1843 and that of Br Ambrose Treacy and companions in 1868 were not unrelated. The First connection is through Francis Larkin**, who, when in Sydney, taught at the Kent Street school at Miller's Point. He, as you know, later **taught Ambrose in Thurles, told him stories of Australia, and nurtured his vocation.** Francis also returned to Australia in 1881, although his biographer notes he was not very enthusiastic about that transfer- well he'd have been about 60! He found Parade, Melbourne, difficult but thrived in the 12 years of his time in Brisbane, where he died at Gregory Terrace. His was a very big funeral at St Stephen's cathedral.

**Secondly, there's a connection through Peter Scannell** who taught in a school in Macquarie Street and on return to Ireland he was founding Director of Newry and also New Ross, and also taught in England. His biographer refers to his austere nature and great powers of endurance. **As a friend of Ambrose** he was one of a few who farewelled Ambrose and his party departing from Dublin for Liverpool on August 15, 1868.

**Of course our focus is more on the pioneers of 1868.** I am sure all of you are familiar with the life of Ambrose: his deep faith; his energy and drive; Religious vision and unrelenting zeal to provide Christian education especially for the poor; his far-sighted initiatives with education; his work ethic; care and concern for his confreres, especially the sick ones and his extraordinary talents and judgment when it came to establishing schools. He never sought the limelight so I thought, in this toast, it is not inappropriate briefly to highlight his associates in the great mission and adventure of 1868.

**Joseph Nolan (1832-1904)** a Kerryman, & non-teaching Brother, a skilled carpenter, was very useful to Ambrose in his three years here. He did admirable work later notably at Artane and Limerick's industrial schools. In the 1900's when Ambrose was an Assistant to the Superior General in Ireland, He worked again with Joseph in the building of Marino.

The next two were probably his closest confidants & supporters over the years.

**Furseay Bodkin 1844 to 1929** hailed from Tuam, one of thirteen children and his biographer in the 1930 necrology tells of a man of austere life with regards food, drink and sleep with an extraordinary work ethic, a deep thinker and life-long learner, very knowledgeable about nature. He enjoyed working outside, loved



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horticulture and flowers and was happy in community life and an excellent teacher. He helped Ambrose with fund raising and was founding Superior of our first school in NZ in Dunedin and also Nudgee, Qld. in 1890. It was there he spent many days blazing a track through dense shrub and forest separating the college from the railway station. He later designed an orphanage at Clontarf WA. His biographer declared he never yielded to pessimism and had a strong trust in God.

**Barnabas Lynch 1839-1921** was teaching in Kilkenny prior to being selected for Australia. He worked mainly in and around Melbourne and Victoria. He was head of Parade college. By nature shy he still threw himself into collecting to fund the schools and was very good at it. He was a good horseman and needed to be for his travels to remote areas visiting splitters camps and mining towns, places like Ballarat, Bendigo and Warnambool. He found the summers difficult but his biographer notes his sturdy frame, cheerful disposition, tactfulness and shrewdness and his prayerfulness. In 1874 at St Vincent' orphanage while successfully treating some lads who'd contracted Ophthalmia he was infected too and over years gradually went blind, bearing that with uncomplaining patience.

## **TODAY WE HAIL SOME DEFINING VIRTUES distinguishing Br Ambrose and his companions**

They possessed a **DISCIPLINE** fashioned through their **VOW OF OBEDIENCE**, always seeking and doing what they understood God was asking of them. A **GOSPEL DETACHMENT** sustained them in their leaving the familiarities of family and their country of great culture and emerging nationhood to give their lives and talents to the lowly and poor in a vast, strange, harsh land. For this they **ENDURED GREATLY**— it is hard for us to appreciate the degree of discomfort, fatigue and privations in their life-style, and ceaseless work and travels – especially on horseback though sometimes trackless bush.

Their **TRUST IN PROVIDENCE** fired their **DARING**. The **AUDACITY** of Ambrose particularly strikes me, but All were risk-takers, but not rashly, it was always in a context of trust in Providence. Ambrose's commitment to opening new foundations is astounding because every commitment **BURDENED HIM** to find money and men for these foundations. **PRAYERFULNESS** was a constant source of their strength fuelling their faith in their Risen Lord and in his mother Mary. God was clearly in the forefront of their consciousness and actions.

**WE**, are here today because by God's grace we have been privileged to play a role in continuing what they began;

**WE**, through changes wrought by time and ageing and dwindling numbers, have handed over, with confidence, their legacy and what was once our main ministry to Edmund Rice Education Australia.

**SO WE TODAY**, struggling to discern our new role in a new age for our world-wide congregation, can draw inspiration from those who blazed a trail before us.

**WE REMEMBER with gratitude the God-graced lives of sacrifice of AMBROSE TREACY and the PIONEERING MEN OF 1843 AND 1868 and the many from Ireland who joined them in the name of Blessed Edmund AS WE STAND AND RAISE A GLASS and say DEO GRATIAS.**

Michael D. Walsh cfc



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## Camp Executive Officers & Program Officers 3 Day Gathering at Mulgoa

The 3-day gathering of these wonderful camp workers was filled with extraordinary ideas, support and outcomes. EOs and POs came to Mulgoa from all over Oceania to collectively share their wisdom and their dreams for the future of the Camps.

Dr Pauline Meemeduma was a guest presenter to the group on the first day and there was much learning and awareness around the issue of child protection. It was the last time that the group collectively would be with Dr Meemeduma and so there was a deep sense of thanks to her for her professional support over the years.

The gathering would not have come together if it had not been for the great work done by the planning committee of Emily Banks, Jeremy Seng and Brendan Webb. Br Geoff Whitefield facilitated the forums and we were wonderfully lead in prayer, thought and in action throughout the three days.

At the end of the gathering sub committees had been formed to share ideas and to produce outcomes in the areas of Child Protection, High Risk and High Needs, Transgender and other policies.

Edmund Rice Ministries Oceania is very fortunate to be working with such dedicated, responsible men and women within our Camps throughout Oceania.

Helen Mahoney  
Chair, Edmund Rice Ministries Oceania





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## This is big. But we need your help



Friend--

We've been in Canberra all this week, along with other human rights organisations, in what has been a whirlwind of events. We went to get Kids Off Nauru, we are leaving with the hope that we might see legislation pass Parliament next week that would see a drastically improved process for medical transfers from Nauru and Manus Island that would stop any further loss of life.

But we need your help to convince the Labor party and moderate Liberals that the Australian public are sick of the cruel, inhumane treatment of refugees in offshore detention.

### [Can you take a moment to call your local MP to encourage them to support 'The Urgent Medical Treatment Bill'?](#)

On Tuesday we delivered a petition of 170,000 signatures to the crossbench, led by its newest member - Dr Kerryn Phelps - who made offshore processing a key issue in her election campaign for Wentworth. Inside Parliament we met with a range of MPs and Senators to discuss the issue of children on Nauru, but also our latest report '[Until When: The Forgotten Men of Manus Island](#)' which details the horrors we are seeing on Manus Island for the men stuck there.

Since then, things have been moving quickly, and Kerryn Phelps has announced her intention to put forward 'The Urgent Medical Transfers Bill' in Parliament to compel the Federal government to medically transfer anyone, not just children, from Nauru or Manus Island if two treating doctors recommend it.

With the increased influence of the crossbench in Parliament, there is the very real possibility that with the support of the ALP and some Liberals, they could not only get Kids Off Nauru, but pass legislation that could stop any further loss of life on Manus Island or Nauru. This is huge.

### [Please join us in calling our local MPs to ask them #BackTheBill and end the years of torture.](#)

Friend if we can make this happen, this could be the solution to years of inhumane and cruel treatment of innocent people. The time for waiting is over, its time to act. Please call your MP today!

Yours in determination,

Kelly, for the Refugee Council team

Refugee Council of Australia

<http://action.refugeecouncil.org.au/>

P.S- Running effective campaigns can be tough, but we have the best chance of achieving positive change when we have the resources to produce quality research, reach new people and travel to meet with politicians. [Can you make a donation to support our advocacy and campaigns work today?](#)