



## NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND



### Ethical Encounter – Housing

On Tuesday 3rd of October 2017, the Edmund Rice Justice Trust held another ethical encounter breakfast on housing, this time in Christchurch. It was presented by John Minto, a well-known social justice advocate.

Throughout his life, John has been involved in a lot of New Zealand issues, such as the 1981 Springbok Tour and brought many wonderful insights into the issue of housing, particularly as it related to Canterbury housing post-earthquake and the social justice implications our current housing crisis has for many families.

There was a lot of robust discussion around the table that produced a critical exploration about how the many social justice issues are interlinked – such as income inequality, taxes and housing itself. We would like to thank John for taking the time to come and present on this pressing social justice issue in the community and we would like to also thank all those who came and participated.

### Edmund Rice Street Retreat



From Thursday October 5th to Saturday October 7th, the annual Edmund Rice Street Retreat was held at St Thomas' of Canterbury College. The annual Street Retreat is sponsored by the Edmund Rice Justice Trust. This year we had 26 Year 12 students participate in the programme. They came from Kavanagh College, Liston College, St Kevin's College, St Thomas' of Canterbury College and Villa Maria College.

The street retreat offers the students the chance to explore the many social justice issues in our community and to work with organisations such as the Salvation Army, St Vincent De Paul, Pathways Reintegration, Community Law Canterbury, The Christchurch City Mission and St John of God Rehabilitation Hospital.

The experience also included interactive talks with the Christchurch Police and social justice advocate John Minto where they talked in depth about many of the issues faced in communities right across New Zealand.

In their evaluations, students commented on how well run and enjoyable the experience was. The retreat included providing a dinner for 8 people on a budget of \$10 and sleeping rough during some cold and wet Christchurch nights.

Thank all the staff who took the time to organise and help run the street retreats and the students who attended and very enthusiastically participated.

**Boris Baptist**

*Project Officer – Edmund Rice Justice Aotearoa/New Zealand Trust*

## ACRATH UPDATES



### ACRATH exceeded all milestones related to the funding objectives

#### July 2014 – June 2017:

ACRATH has engaged consistently in awareness-raising activities with schools, parishes and community groups. 461 presentations are testimony to this.

- 461 presentations given,
- 97 website blogs uploaded,
- 145 e-bulletins distributed,
- 34 trafficked women and 21 of their children assisted,
- 431 network meetings attended, 182 MP visits.
- ACRATH volunteers donated 21,911 hours of work to the three year project, conservatively costed according to the SCHCADS award at \$617,013.

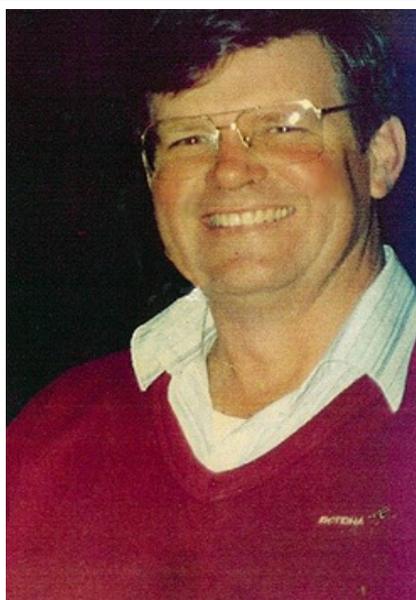
For a detailed report on the ACRATH achievements

[Read October Newsletter](#)

## PROVINCE AND TIMOR LESTE

**Recently Br Peter Clinch on behalf of the Oceania Leadership Team announced that the Province would be withdrawing from ministry in Timor Leste from the end of 2018.**

Recently Br Peter Clinch on behalf of the Oceania Leadership Team announced that the Province would be withdrawing from ministry in Timor Leste from the end of 2018. This difficult decision will bring much sadness to the many people from the Edmund Rice Movement around Oceania who have lived and worked and supported our ministry in Timor Leste.



*Br Dan Courtney*

*In 1999 Br Dan Courtney was missioned to live and work among the people of Timor Leste.*

In so many ways the ministry of Comunidade Edmund Rice (CER) has mirrored the life of the Province and the Congregation. The early dream to walk in solidarity with the people of East Timor came from the leadership of St Francis Xavier Province in Queensland and the Northern Territory. Br Francis Hall from England and Br Patrick Payne from Ireland were two of the Brothers who supported Br Dan Courtney in the early days of the mission there. Over the years more than 200 Edmund Rice people have walked with the vulnerable people and fragile nation of Timor Leste.

From New Zealand people like Sr Gail Henry, Sam Drumm and Shane Coleman gave so much to improve the daily lives of the people there through teaching the women in the villages to sew, teaching in the local schools and visiting the people in their homes.

The extraordinary generosity of the community of St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace has been remarkable. The Terrace Timor Network is a wonderful model of respect-filled partnership where parents and former parents of Terrace students have worked tirelessly to improve the standards of education, health and livelihood for the people of the villages and have done so for over ten years now. The schools of Edmund Rice Education Australia have been so generous and loyal to the Timor Leste mission.

The HELP group from St Patrick's Shorncliffe, St Edmund's Ipswich and St Laurence's South Brisbane have gone up year after year and with the help of Br Peter Coe, Adrian Creedy and very generous teachers from the school worked with the trade students of the colleges and the local people to build classrooms, kindergartens, community centres and more.



*Pre-school education was introduced as it was much needed and not available. Pre-school education was introduced as it was much needed and not available.*

In addition to this Immersion groups from Waverley, Terrace, St James' and other EREA communities have built wonderfully warm relationship with the local communities in Timor. Much of the EREA support has been in kind and the financial support of so many EREA schools - but especially the Queensland EREA schools - have provided several four wheel drive ambulances and other key infrastructure for the mission there.

Some sixty Edmund Rice volunteers have worked humbly with the Christian Brothers on the ground in Timor Leste. Jennifer Earle, Renee MacGregor, Sr Rita Hayes sgs, Wendy Baker, Adrian Creedy, Barry Hinton, Chris Zammit, Katrina Powell-Carey, Dr Tim Gray, Alex Johnston and so many others have lived and worked among the people there. These volunteers and the Brothers have been supported by a huge community of family and friends back in Oceania and this support has been financial, moral, personal and spiritual. In small and big ways people have raised funds for Timor, have visited the Brothers there in their isolation, have written, skyped and phoned in care and support.

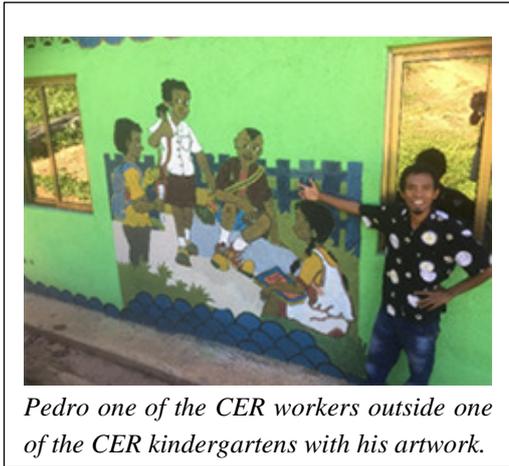
Several Rotary Clubs but especially Inverell, several parishes and Religious Orders both in Australia and in Timor itself (Warwick Parish, Fr John Herd, the Marist Brothers, the

Jesuits and Mercy Sisters) have supported the ministry through good times and bad. Our friends from the Edmund Rice Foundation have been constant in their support of our projects and giving us an avenue to tell our good news stories.

The ministry in Timor Leste has seen the Edmund Rice charism at its best. To this day Br Dan Courtney is honoured among the people of the Railaco villages in the hills behind Dili. Br Dan stood with courage beside the ordinary people in the face of Indonesian aggression and put his life on the line with them. Dan was evacuated from Timor at the last minute and at the insistence of the local people and returned as soon as he could after the departure of the Indonesian military.

When the announcements of the withdrawal of the Brothers were made in the villages of the Ermera district last week, many tears were shed.

It was humbling to witness the deep affection the people have for the Brothers. The presence of the Brothers and so many others from the Edmund Rice Movement has been one of the powerful and positive constants in the lives of the ordinary people. Many Religious Orders when they have gone to Timor have remained in the larger cities. Br Dan Courtney and consequently Br Bill Tynan and Br Frank Hennessy (our Ministry Leaders) have chosen to live with the ordinary people in a very poor rural area.



*Pedro one of the CER workers outside one of the CER kindergartens with his artwork.*

The Christian Brothers have had a proud history in Timor Leste. It was in 1999 that Br Dan Courtney from the then St Francis Xavier Province was missioned to live and work among the people of Timor Leste. Dan led the ministry there from 1999 until his motor bike accident in 2001 which resulted in his being rushed back to Brisbane where he spent the next eleven years in a coma until his death in 2012.

Br Bill Tynan led Comunidade Edmund Rice with great energy and generosity from 2002 until 2012. For the last five years Br Frank Hennessy has generously fulfilled the role of Ministry Leader there. Over the years some fourteen Brothers

have ministered in Timor Leste and we are grateful for their faithful service. On behalf of the Province we wish to thank Brs Jim D'Arcy, Patrick Payne, Francis Hall, Vin Haseler, Richard Walsh, Barry Callan, Bill Tynan, Peter Coe, Frank Hennessy, Phil Joyner, Ray Weston, Bob Chambers and David Standen for all that they did for the people of one of the poorest nations on the planet.

The decision to withdraw from Timor Leste has been especially difficult for the present community of Brothers. We are grateful to Br Barry Callan who has worked teaching English to many seminarians of the Diocese of Dili as well as being a great presence in the Brothers community and providing hospitality to many visitors. Br Frank Hennessy (Ministry Leader) and Br Peter Coe have travelled up each Monday to work with the people in the Railaco District in the mountains at the back of Dili continuing the great work that Br Bill Tynan had passed on to them.



*Br Bill Tynan with some of his Timorese friends.*

As the Province prepares to move on from ministry in Timor Leste every effort is being made to ensure that the people we have built such great relationships with over many years will continue to be supported after we leave. Over the coming months the nature of the future support structures that cannot be reliant upon the Province for either leadership or governance will become clearer.

While this announcement will bring much sadness it is also a chance to pause and reflect in gratitude for the blessings that the privilege of this ministry has bestowed upon the Province



*Br Frank Hennessy with some of the kindergarten teachers.*

We will continue to hold the people of Timor Leste in our prayers. In November 2018 there will be rituals of closure, celebration and grieving in Timor Leste as the Brothers prepare to leave. In January 2019 there will be opportunities to thank the many people from the Edmund Rice Movement who have also been part of the Timor Leste story and to ritualise the closure of our direct day to day involvement there. These celebrations will be in Brisbane.

***Br Damien Price***  
*Coordinator of Developing Nations*  
*Oceania Province*



*Br Frank Hennessy with some of the kindergarten teachers.*

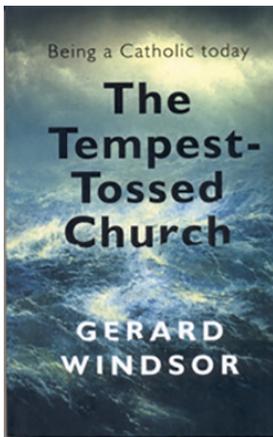
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## BOOK REVIEW BY BR BRIAN GRENIER

### THE TEMPEST-TOSSED CHURCH: BEING A CATHOLIC TODAY

Gerard Windsor, NewSouth, 2017, RRP \$29.99 (paperback)



When we are baptised, it is the community's faith that is operative in the sacramental rite. It becomes truly our own faith when we appropriate it as defining our relationship with God and giving ultimate meaning, purpose and direction to our lives. This is the work of a lifetime which calls for reappraisal and reaffirmation in the light of the challenges faced by the Church in an ever-changing and constantly turbulent world.

In *The Tempest-Tossed Church*, the title of which is drawn from a rather sombre 19th century hymn, Sydney-based Gerard Windsor—'cradle Catholic', former Jesuit and accomplished author—reflects upon his personal faith journey and explores 'the whats and whys of [his] Catholicism'. In doing so, he addresses insightfully and in an encouraging way what fellow believers might agree are some of the big theological, social and cultural questions confronting the contemporary Church, beset as it is by the scandal of sexual abuse and consequent credibility issues.

Many, perhaps most, of his readers will resonate with his acknowledgement that 'for those born into the Catholic tribe, your degree of affiliation as an adult is often doubtful, above all to yourself'. Finding the truest expression of his own religious position in the words, 'I hope', he would, I believe, agree with Kenneth Leech's observation that 'faith does not bring the false peace of answered questions and resolved paradoxes'.

An engaging storyteller, Gerard Windsor introduces the chapters of his book with what he calls 'portraits'. These vignettes are evocative accounts of events that have invited his response or of people who have influenced, and to some extent shaped, his spiritual quest. In these accounts we meet, among others: Fathers Tom Daly, John Cowburn and Paul Gardiner (three of his teachers as a young Jesuit), Father Kevin Doherty (guestmaster at the Cistercian abbey of Mount Melleray, Ireland), Monsignor Tony Doherty

(himself a recently-published writer), Sister Gertrude Gallagher RSM, Ines (a German lawyer and fellow pilgrim), Fijian mother of six Luisa and Sylvia Hale (his next-door neighbour for thirty-six years).

The author's broad interest in and familiarity with art and literature is evident throughout the book and enhances the reading experience. A brief bibliography identifies works quoted in or referred to in the text and 'the reading that over the years has most contributed to [his] ideas about Christianity'.

The Tempest-Tossed Church will appeal to an educated readership. It should prompt readers to reflect more deeply on their own faith journey, to articulate it more clearly and to profess it more openly. Our role in the Barque of Peter is not simply as passengers but as members of the crew.

*Reviewed by Br Brian Grenier CFC*



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