



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA

Tenth Anniversary of Edmund Rice Education Australia

A Message from the EREA Council

Greetings to all in Edmund Rice Education Australia

During the recent school holidays a significant anniversary was reached for Edmund Rice Education Australia. Ten years ago, on the first of October 2007, the Christian Brothers established Edmund Rice Education Australia. In doing so the Christian Brothers delegated to the members of its Council the necessary authority to conduct the schools which had before that been the responsibility of the four Provinces of Christian Brothers in Australia.

The planning for this decision on the part of the Brothers had been in train for quite some years and since 2000 had been focussed on developing this new entity for all of Australia. The leadership teams of the Brothers, school leadership and school board members all contributed to the thinking and eventual shape of what would become Edmund Rice Education Australia. At the end of 2012 Edmund Rice Education Australia was formally recognised by the Church as a Pontifical Public Juridic Person and incorporated for Australia as Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Our story and celebration would be merely that of one organisation taking on the work of another if it was not for our immersion in the story of a particular person, Blessed Edmund Rice. In his introduction to his compilation of sacred songs in *Sacred Story* the poet, song writer and singer Liam Lawton wrote:

It was only when I began researching the life and times of Edmund Rice for this collection, did I realise how unique this story was – with



very few, if any, parallels in Irish History. As the story unfolded I found myself being drawn into the world of one who experienced the harshness of penal days, the loving environment of family, the excitement of merchant business, the bliss of courtship and marriage, the tragedy of losing a partner, the sadness of holding a disabled child, the courage to leave one world and enter another and the selfless giving and complete service to the voiceless. (Sacred Story, A Celtic Celebration, Liam Lawton, Carlow, 1997)

It is nearly one hundred and fifty years since a follower of Edmund Rice, Brother Patrick Ambrose Treacy, stepped ashore with his companions at Station Pier in Melbourne to commence to do for the young voiceless ones of Australia what Edmund Rice had done for those in Ireland some sixty years earlier. In Edmund Rice Education Australia we are taking up the ministry of the many Brothers and their colleagues who followed in their footsteps.

On this tenth anniversary of the establishment of Edmund Rice Education Australia we can rejoice that the vision of those who planned and worked long and hard over so many years has been fulfilled. Edmund Rice Education Australia now governs, manages and conducts over fifty schools and learning centres. This is a great responsibility and a very great privilege. The Brothers have not only generously gifted the schools and their resources, a physical patrimony, to Edmund Rice Education Australia, but more importantly, they have gifted their spiritual patrimony by sharing the Charism of Blessed Edmund Rice to enliven and inspire all in Edmund Rice Education Australia as we continue to develop this schools ministry in Church mission.

Our continuing development as Edmund Rice Education Australia has only been possible because of the generous contributions of the Christian Brothers and all our parents, staff, students and administrators. Many have been inspired by the Charism that we share. The *Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition* gives practical expression to that Charism through the Touchstones that have been developed by our community. As the Charter proclaims:

These touchstones give us ideals authentically linked with the charism which underpins the ministry in our schools and educational endeavours. They help us set our direction and define our goals as, following Blessed Edmund's vision, we continue to reflect and seek to make the Gospel a living reality in our communities.

May each of us and each of our schools share in the prophetic mission of the Catholic Church to continue the work of Jesus and bring good news to the poor.

With deep and sincere thanks for all you do to bring this mission to life.



Paul D Oakley cfc

President, Edmund Rice Education Australia

On behalf of the Council – 9 October 2017



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA**