

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS • LATIN AMERICAN REGION

MAY • JUNE • 2015 EDITION

LATAM

THE CORN HARVEST

SOLIDARITY IN ACTION



The background of the image is a scenic view of a rocky coastline. In the foreground, there are dark, jagged rocks covered with patches of green grass and moss. The rocks extend towards the sea. The sea is a deep blue, and the sky above is a pale, hazy blue with soft white clouds. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

**The spirit impels us to open
our hearts and minds.**

**God is calling us to be
compassionate people
transforming old structures,
cultural mindsets and
practices.**

Future direction, Destined for Life.
Nairobi document, 2014



CONTENTS

MAY – JUNE 2015

04 | MEETING THE MYSTERY
A look of compassion, tenderness,
and solidarity.

08 | PLAYING WITH MATCHES
Isaura and Nélica gained back their
houses and their friendship.

10 | OUR JOY
Stories from the Centro Hermano
Manolo

**12 | CELEBRATIONS IN CANTO
GRANDE**
We pay a special tribute to our
teaching mothers and fathers.

**14 | EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
BEYOND BORDERS - LATIN
AMERICA**
Leaders of the five educational
centers of Latin America start to
consolidate the Latin American
Educational Network.

16 | CORN HARVEST
Students, teachers, parents and
companies in a solidarity action.

**17 | PASTORAL TEAM: WORKSHOPS
AND ACTIVITIES**
Stella Maris

**17 | RETREAT OF IMMERSION IN
ZAMBIA**
Testimony from Two Staff Members of
Stella Maris College, Montevideo, Uruguay.

**18 | PROJECT “WALKING WITH
EDMUND”**
40 missionaries inspired by the charism of
Edmund Rice tutor children in Fe y Alegría

19 | RETREATS
Students of Cardenal Newman participate
in retreats

**20 | NEW HORIZONS FOR THE
EDMUND RICE NETWORK IN
LATIN AMERICA**
By Felipe Lagos

21 | MISSIONARY MEETING
The alumni team in charge of the various
missions of Cardenal Newman College
gathered with Stella Maris alumni team.

Meeting the Mystery

A look of compassion, tenderness, and solidarity. 150 years of the return of a devotion, 140 years of the persecution of the Christian Brothers' educational system

By Hugo, Kevin and Paul

Dear Brothers and Fellows of the Edmund Rice Network, It was 140 years ago that, in a national synod of the Irish Bishops, it was decreed that the Christian Brothers be forbidden from running schools. That meant the end of our educational mission, and thus, our demise. The Christian Brothers decided to send two Brothers, Anthony Maxwell and Austin Grace, to Rome in order to appeal to the Pope in behalf of our institute.

Two friendly Redemptorist priests helped the Brothers in their endeavors in Rome, Father Douglas and Father Morgan. Both of them insisted that the undertaking should be under the protection of Our Lady

of Perpetual Help, whose figure had come back to be shown to the Roman people only ten years ago. The Superior General from Ireland asked that all homes and schools should start a novena to the Virgin for that purpose. Father Morgan wrote: "Have faith in our Lady of Perpetual Help and place her image in each school to gain her support."

Prints of the icon Virgin were sent to each school and put in a place of honor. On December 3, 1878, the Holy See responded favorably to the appeal by the Brothers.

This coming 27th of June, 2015, the Redemptorists will start the celebration of the 150th anniversary in memory of the date when the icon of the Virgin returned to her original site, where the Roman people





In Latin America the affection with which people see the Virgin Mary is a powerful instrument of evangelization and has served as strong support in times of big struggles in our countries.

had worshiped her for centuries since her arrival from Crete up until the destruction of her church by the Napoleonic troops. The theme of the celebrations, which will last until June 27, 2016, is Our Lady of Perpetual Help as an icon of love. It is strongly hoped that the celebrations will help us walk towards the meeting of the mystery.

In Latin America the affection with which people see the Virgin Mary is a powerful instrument of evangelization and has served as strong support in times of big struggles in our countries. The Virgin Mary reflects the image of compassion as well as liberation. We strongly invite that we all look at her in a contemplative manner in the icon and, by way of the three Declarations in Nairobi, trust that Our Way into the Future will enable us to enjoy a new life.

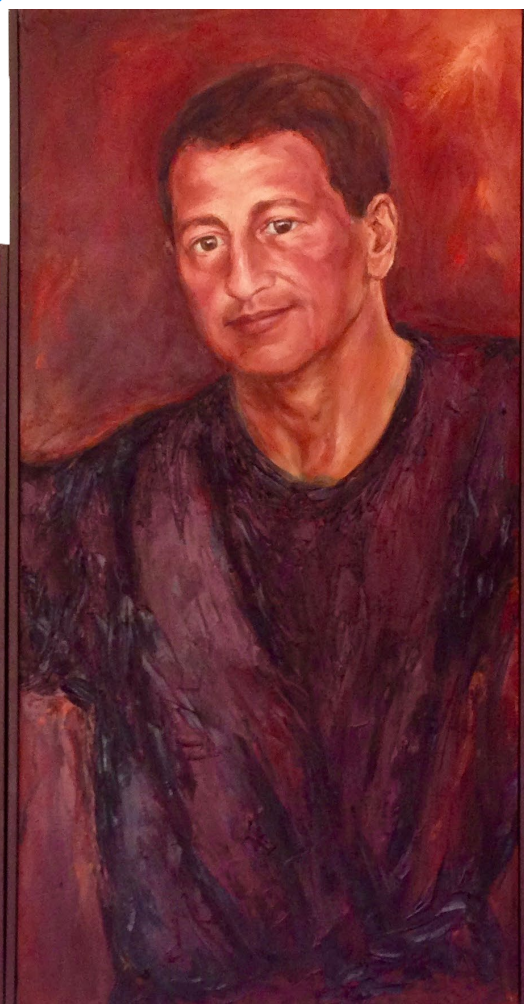
It is hoped that the look that Virgin Mary directs towards us, the tenderness with which she holds

her Son, and the trust with which Jesus finds refuge in her mother's arms will encourage us to:

- *Build joyful communities characterized by intimacy, gentleness, compassion and love.*
- *Live a simple and shared lifestyle with accountability, which calls us to a radical shift from our comfortable way of living.*
- *Be in right relationship as brothers and sisters with each other, with people made poor and with the whole earth community, conscious that being brothers and sisters is our pathway to our being evangelized and transformed.*

In the mystic life of the painters of icons, each one of their works is like the eyes of God looking at the world.

May we see during these days in the sacred icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help the need we have for compassion, tenderness, and solidarity in order to make a reality the call for transformation which guided us in the Chapter of 2014.





**Have courage; the
good seed will grow
up in the children's
hearts later on.**

Edmund Rice

Edmund Rice House, Callan 2015.

Playing with matches

Isaura and Nélide gained back their houses and their friendship

By PAUL KEOHANE

I was walking along the street in Canto Grande one day when I met Tomasa, a grandmother from the hill, pushing a trolley and selling “churros”, a long donut with a caramel filling. She spoke about Isaura, a friend of hers who also sold “churros”, a woman with four children aged 17, 13, 4 and a baby 1 year old. Isaura’s husband has abandoned her and the children. Andrés the four year old boy was playing with matches one day when he accidentally set their plywood house on fire. The family escaped and lost everything. The fire spread to the neighbour’s house and it also was burnt to the ground.

I went to visit Isaura and her family accompanied by Stephen and Emily, a volunteer from South Africa. They live in an area where we haven’t worked before, so we were breaking new ground. The family was now living in a tent, three metres square, donated by the Civil Defence Section of the municipality. The only furniture they



The family was now living in a tent, three metres square, donated by the Civil Defence Section.

PHOTO:
Immersion group from Brother Rice High School, Michigan.

had were two stretcher style beds, part of the donation. With the onset of winter, the family suffers the cold as they live high up on a hill and the

damp air of the Lima winter penetrated their tent. An immersion group was due in a fortnight and we offered Isaura a prefabricated house

We discovered that Isaura and Nelida are talking again. They shared the bags of clothes donated by families from our school in Canto Grande.

to be built by them. She gladly accepted the offer. During our conversation she told us that her neighbour, Nelida, had not spoken to her since the fire and there was tension between the families.

I went back a few days later with Jorge, our carpenter, to take the measurements for the new house. When we completed our task, we went to speak to Nelida and told her that Isaura had asked us to help her too.

Isaura's new house was assembled last Monday by an immersion group from Brother Rice High School, Michigan.

The boys sprayed the fifteen panels with a petrol based liquid to prevent the termites eating the timber and then carried them up over a hundred steps to the site.

On Tuesday the boys painted the house. The colour that



PHOTO: Students building Isaura's house.

Isaura chose was melon. We also bought beds and mattresses. We discovered that Isaura and Nelida are talking again. They shared the bags of clothes donated by families from our school in Canto Grande. An immersion group from Palma

High School, Salinas will build a house for Nelida next Monday. We don't know what colour she will choose. Maybe it will be melon too.



PHOTO: Immersion group from Cardinal Newman High School.

OUR JOY

Roberto and Hugo whom we have seen grow up in the Centro Hermano Manolo, graduated from Christophers Leadership course offered by the Maryknoll Mission Center in Cochabamba.

BY FRANCISCO TUIRO

The plurinational state of Bolivia is alive these days with the fever of the feast of the Aymara New Year. The Aymara are one of the ancient peoples of Bolivia, and aymara is also the name of their language. The Bolivian leader, Evo Morales, of Aymara origin, has decreed that each June 21 would mark Aymara New Year, raising it to the status of a national holiday, which means that all institutions, companies, and educational units, both public and private, should suspend activities for the day.

June 21 marks the winter solstice and the beginning of a new agricultural cycle, a key point chosen by “los amautas” the Aymaran priests, to return to a reordering of the land... Likewise for us Brothers at the Brother Manolo Center it is gratifying to report that two of our youth (Roberto Fernández and Hugo Zeballos), whom we have seen grow up in the Center, graduated from Christophers leadership course offered by the Maryknoll Mission Center.

This leadership program aims to develop the leadership capacities of each participant, promoting



PHOTO:
Br. Dermot
Cregan
celebrating
his birthday.





self-analysis and the development of strengths and personal talents. The program teaches that each person is unique and that the leader has a mission and can make a difference. We wish our students great success in this initial step forward for them. They are leaders and we Brothers hope to continue sowing the seed of building a better world through integral human development, solidarity and transformation.

At the same time Brother Jorge Alejandro Tavera, a second year novice, completed his theology course in the religious vows at the Center of Initial Formation in the Religious Life.

On June 1 we Brothers were invited to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life with other congregations of brothers. Only the Marist brothers responded, but it was an unforgettable moment to be able to breathe an air of brotherhood. Also during the first week of June we had a visitor from Peru: Miss Fiorela, a friend of Brother Jorge, who had worked at the Brother Manolo Center. We very much appreciate her contribution to our mission.

On June 10 the community celebrated with great joy the 68 springtimes of Brother Dermot Creagan. It was a simple celebration, but a lively puppet show testified to the unique and special character of Brother Dermot. From May 16-22, Brother Kevin Bernard stayed with us for our canonical visitation. In those days the Maryknoll Mission Center offered a course on the theme of Christ as the source of life.

PHOTO: Br. Francisco Tuiro (middle), in the graduation ceremony of Roberto and Hugo.

Celebrations in Canto Grande

We pay a special tribute to our teaching mothers and fathers. We remebered and celebrated the month of Edmund Rice.

BY WILLIAMS CUNYAS

In May we celebrated Mother's Day with artistic presentations on the part of the primary and secondary students. Each level celebrated Mother's Day in the schedule that corresponds to each, and the staff of the school and teachers shared a small lunch to honor teaching mothers.

In June we also pay a special tribute to our teaching fathers, including Bro. Michael O'Donnell, Bro. Ricardo Glatz, and Bro. Javier Sullivan, who take on the role of loving, concerned father-figures. Brother Williams also is an active Brother in the activities of the school, working in the areas of discipline, supervision of the tutoring hour, catechesis, the choir of the parish community, and the "Walking with Edmund" program.

Each June we remember and celebrate the month of Edmund Rice. On Monday morning, we blessed bread in memory of the bakery that our Brother Edmund Rice established in his school in Waterford; after which we distributed the bread to students, teachers and the educational community. Later about forty student and ex-student missionaries who support the program "Walking with Edmund" were recognized. Then on Monday, June 8th, our secondary level class representati-

ves pronounced their promises to the educational community to help their classmates.

Our brothers Michael O'Donnell, Ricardo Glatz, and Javier Sullivan are enjoying a well-deserved family visit in the USA. Brother Alberto Llanos traveled to Colombia to participate in the Congress of Consecrated Life organized by Conference of Latin American Religious: about 1500 men and women religious of Latin America met to consider the changes that consecrated life may see during the next three years. Alberto continues teaching English to the students and supporting the school dining hall.

Postulant Anibal Torres attends classes in the Religious Conference in Lima and feels it to be a lively and interesting learning. At this time of Brother Javier's family visit, Anibal is also responsible for the school band. In this year's "Expo - Fe" we focused on ecological and environmental issues from the perspective of faith. Our project is the greening of a steep, dry hill behind the school, in which the secondary students have to clean the area, spade the earth, spread fertilizer, and water the plants with recycled water.





PHOTO:
Group of
teaching
mothers of Fe
y Alegría High
School..



PHOTO:
Students of Fe
y Alegría High
School, Lima.

Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders – Latin America

Leaders of the five educational centers of Latin America start to consolidate the Latin American Educational Network

INTERVIEW WITH GABRIELA ROCA, DIRECTOR OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

1. What role do you play at Stella Maris College?

I started working at Stella Maris in 2004. In that year and up until 2012 I worked in the classroom as a Spanish teacher. Currently I am head of primary school of the college.

2. Together with the participants at the meeting were you able to define some guidelines of action to follow for the future?

The April meeting in Montevideo made it possible that leaders of the five educational centers of Latin America start to consolidate the regional Edmund Rice network. During these days of friendship, meeting and a good deal of work, we confirmed our link with the global network of Edmund Rice educational communities (**Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders ERE-BB**) and worked on specific lines of action for our region. Within these lines, it is possible to highlight:

■ *Our clear intention to develop our own regional identity through*

virtual meetings and face-to-face meetings of our leaders.

■ *Our support and promotion for a transformative education, based on our society's realities, an education that favors the development of projects and pastoral outreach among the students of the different centers.*

■ *Our intention to be a voice of justice in our educational communities, encouraging activities of immersion and volunteering, seeking to develop a true social awareness.*

■ *Our intention to promote a leadership that can spread and encourage this regional and global commitment in our communities. It will be essential to work together and maintain a close link with the global network.*

3. Please define in just a few words the importance of this meeting for you.

This regional meeting provided an enriching and hopeful experience that we will continue to explore together. Clearly we are united in the charism of Edmund Rice despite the variety of cultures in which we live. We experienced a new testament to the inspiring presence of the mystery of God. This conference was a real privilege and a great opportunity. I am very grateful.





The Corn Harvest

“The Corn Harvest” involves students, teachers, parents and companies in a solidarity action, teaching students about the problems that exist in their community and about the power of generating social capital.

BY PATRICIA PONCE DE LEÓN

In 2005 a group of agricultural producers created a social and solidarity movement called “The Corn Harvest” in which they made available five acres of corn ready to be harvested. They then invited high school students, accompanied by their parents and teachers, to take charge of the harvest. This strategy engaged the community, especially the young, in solidarity actions. In symbolic payment for the harvest, various companies contributed money that was collected and delivered to needy social institutions. Both the companies and social organizations were from the same general area of the students.

“The Corn Harvest” thus involves students, teachers, parents and companies in a solidarity action, teaching students about the problems that exist in their community and about the power of generating social capital. Our goal for 2015 is to unite with a new social action in support of the organization Mothers of the Cross (Madres de La Cruz).

This action generates the distribution of more than 20,000 plates of food harvested by children and young people, which will be delivered to school canteens and to the Mothers of the Cross Center.





Pastoral Team: Workshops and activities

We have offered a series of workshops for our pastoral projects, named “Mount Zion” for the high school

students and “Project Waterford” for the primary students. These projects, begun this year, include space for personal and group reflec-

tion, a time for sharing experiences and attending to the needs of the participants. The workshops are times of encounter, providing growth and quiet moments in which all of us can just breathe a little easier for a time.

In these gatherings we enjoy the opportunity to meet the God who seeks us and who wants us to go forth with our hearts aflame. In each group we encounter both God and each other and pray that Jesus may continue to live in our hearts. We’re grateful for the invaluable participation of our alumni who accompany us in each of the workshops, and we appreciate the willingness and openness of all the students to continue this process of searching for God.

Retreat of immersion

During Holy Week of 2015 the Congregation of Christian Brothers, and in particular Brother Nsamu Moonga, organized an immersion retreat at the International Spirituality Center in Lusaka, Zambia. The immersion group consisted of two teachers from Cardinal Newman College in Buenos Aires, Argentina, three teachers from different Christian Brothers schools in Zambia, and us two teachers from Stella Maris College in Uruguay. Brothers Sunil Britto and Francis Hall of the Transitional Support Team also



International Spirituality Center, Lusaka, Zambia: above, left to right, Bruno Cazzuli, Chilala Chiyombwe, May Furlong, Brother Nsamu Moonga, Yusiku Imasiku, and Andrew Mukelabai; below, left to right: José Hernández, Brother Francis Hall, Brother Sunil Britto, and Fabiana García Paz

participated.

The retreat was an enriching experience for us as we analyzed what it is that unites us as humans on this planet. We recognized our connections with each other and acknowledged that in the other person are the joys and sufferings of all. We affirmed the urgent call to take better care of our precious planet, and we celebrated the wonderful invitation to connect with each

other over the long distances and varied circumstances of our lives. As part of the retreat we visited a squatters’ camp, a refugee camp, an orphanage, and an AIDS clinic. We also engaged in moments of prayer, reflection and petition and in different kinds of liturgies.



proyecto
caminando con
edmundo

Project “Walking with Edmundo”

From 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm 70 children are tutored by a group of missionaries inspired by the charism of Edmund Rice in Canto Grande

BY WILLIAMS CUNYAS

The “Walking with Edmundo” was initiated with the aim of promoting the integral development of children and adolescents, and this program is aimed at children from school Fe y Alegría, this service is an expression of commitment as followers of Edmund with those made poor. Also, as a requirement of solidarity, of our desire for justice and yearning for equality and peace.

On 4 May 2015 the program walking with Edmundo started, the program itself is an inspiration of the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice who spent his life and resources to grant good education to the poor. The existence of the project,

The existence of the project was always present in the minds of the brothers and members of the Edmund Rice Network in Latin America.

was always present in the minds of the brothers and members of the Edmund Rice Network in Latin America.

The main activities focus in tutoring children of primary who are struggling academically in Maths and communication. Everyday a group of missionaries gather in the facilities of the Fe y Alegría School from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The activities begin with the opening prayer and then they rush to their classrooms to start with some Maths. After taking a short break, the lessons carry on for one more hour. We currently have 70 children of primary and, fourty missionaries who tutor the children.



Retreats

BY GUILLERMO BULLRICH

Fifty minutes from the College is Mary House, the site of retreats for many years for students from 5th and 6th grades of the Cardinal Newman College. Close by the College, but also feeling very far, the House welcomed us with the first cold of the year and the almost leafless trees.

During the month of June retreats for the 5th year students were conducted. Alumni groups and members of the Pastoral team led the retreats, which focused on three topics: self-assessment, the values present in our families, and appreciation of our friends.

AGUSTÍN PAVLOVSKY, a 5th year student, shared his experience: *"We separated into small groups of five or six and activities began. Throughout the retreat that group remained together, and most of the activities were carried out with them. I had a very nice group and I am very grateful to each one of them since they opened up and could trust in me. In the night in which we read the letters of our loved ones I went to sleep with an immense happiness in my heart. I learned of values that others saw in me which I did not realize I possessed. I felt appreciated and loved by them."*

IVÁN BADESSICH, also of 5th year, tells us about one of the other activities: *"It was wonderful to be face to face with a friend and tell him everything I think and value in him. It gave me much happiness because such moments are very few in life and hard to initiate."*

New Horizons for the Edmund Rice Network in Latin America

BY FELIPE LAGOS

A few months ago we participated in the first meeting in our South American region of Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders.

I arrived in Montevideo with many expectations, eager to partake in the network, but without many certainties, because I did not know many of the participants of the meeting.

It was very gratifying to get to know the people involved in five educational institutions in Latin America and share with each other the reality of our situations. I could see that, although we have very different situations, we all share the same spirit. The presence of Wayne Tinsey, President of world EREBB, and Brother Hugo Cáceres helped and inspired these first steps we have taken together in our continent.

When the meeting ended, we had many new ideas and projects to continue to enrich us. I made new friends and colleagues, marked by the charisma of Edmund, with hopes to dream together and to continue to share our faith and our vision of education. This filled me with joy, energy and enthusiasm as we look towards new horizons for the network in Latin America.





Missionary Meeting

BY FELIPE LAGOS

Last weekend the alumni team in charge of the various missions of the Cardinal Newman College welcomed the missionaries from the Stella Maris College alumni team. The meeting was held in Vicente López's house where he spoke about the upcoming mission of summer that will be held in Argentina with the participation of young people from Cardinal Newman, Stella Maris, Fe y Alegría No. 26 of Lima, Peru and a Mundo Mejor College (Better World) of Chimbote, Peru. The idea of the meeting was to share the situation of each team and evaluate the different possibilities for the future. So, we relived

once again our reasons and hopes for the mission, remembering what had motivated us to get involved and to continue to do so. We employed various activities and exercises to inspire us in the charism of Edmund, relying on the personal experiences of each person. We came to understand what each team felt and we laid the groundwork to continue working in the upcoming mission and in our groups and the missions to come.

Guido Boustani, a Newman alumnus and member of the mission team, expressed his feelings after the meeting:

"Personally the weekend lived in community with both teams of missionaries was a unique

experience. There was a warm, mutual acceptance which helped the work and our coexistence. I really enjoyed to be able to share my experiences and to express my feelings and my thoughts towards the mission. We could talk about the ideas and contributions of each team and how the previous missions were planned. We all wanted to grow and to continue to build future missions. I felt very comfortable among the group, growing more and more confident and bolstering links with members of both the Argentine and Uruguayan teams. I think that we accomplished much this weekend and developed the strength to continue working together in the mission."

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NEWSLETTER

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