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EDMUND RICE TRIDUUM THREE DAYS OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION IN PREPARATION FOR THE FEAST OF BLESSED EDMUND RICE

5 MAY 2020

INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends,

We celebrate the feast of
Blessed Edmund Rice on 5th May.

The Presentation Brothers traditionally pray special prayers for nine days before the feast. This is called a *Novena*.

I now invite members of the Presentation Family, Presentation School Communities, members of the L.E.A.F. Project Network and friends to join us for **three** days of prayer before the feast (called a Triduum).

You may find the readings and reflections which follow of some help.

We are all conscious of the need for prayer as our world faces the challenge of overcoming the Coronavirus pandemic.

Karl Barth, the greatest Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, wrote: 'To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world'.

Never underestimate the power of a prayerful and listening presence. Never underestimate the power of a single act of human kindness. Stay safe and well!

Br. Martin Kenneally

Director
L.E.A.F. Project.



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EDMUND RICE
LEADING WITH
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EDMUND RICE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

We often think of Edmund Rice as a Religious Founder. We neglect his earlier life as a son, brother, husband and father.

To understand Edmund fully, we must appreciate the family and culture which shaped and nurtured him.

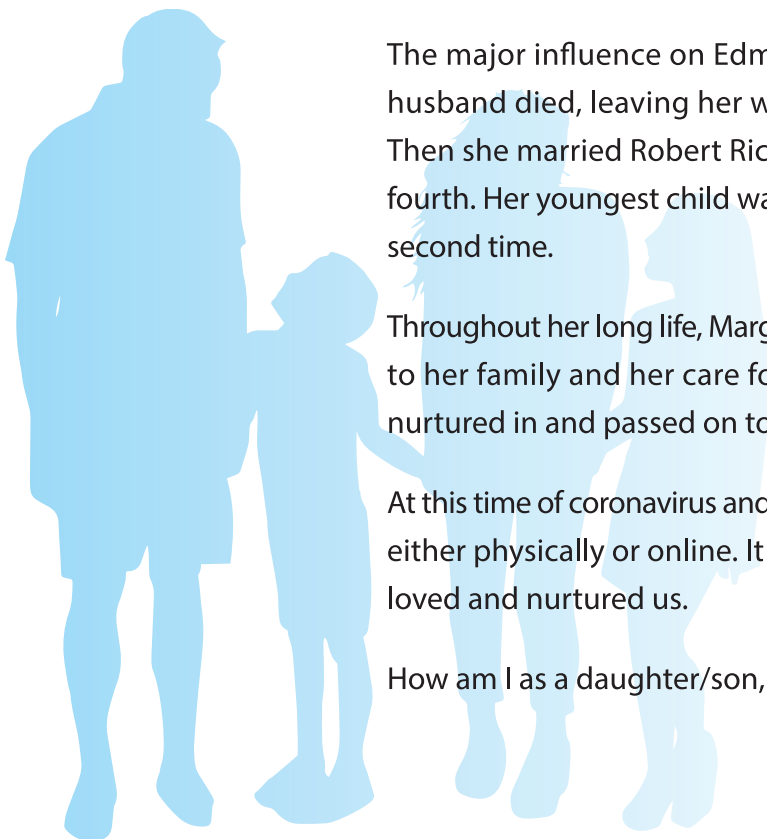
The Irish Catholics of the generation into which Edmund Rice was born were the descendants of martyrs. The earlier generations of Rices and Tierneys (his mother's family) had remained faithful through the persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The major influence on Edmund Rice was his mother, Margaret Rice. Her first husband died, leaving her with two young daughters, Joan and Jane Murphy. Then she married Robert Rice and they had seven children, Edmund being the fourth. Her youngest child was only ten years old when she was widowed for the second time.

Throughout her long life, Margaret Rice was noted for her trust in God, her devotion to her family and her care for the poor and those in need. These qualities she nurtured in and passed on to her son, Edmund.

At this time of coronavirus and lockdown, families are spending more time together either physically or online. It is a time to give thanks to God for those who have loved and nurtured us.

How am I as a daughter/son, sister/brother, husband/wife?





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EDMUND RICE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

SCRIPTURE

Matt 3: 16 -17

And Jesus was baptised. All at once, as he came up out of the water, suddenly the heavens were opened, and he saw God's spirit coming down like a dove and landing on him.

Then there came a voice from the heavens.

'This is my son, my beloved one', said the voice, 'I am delighted with him!'

Hear God saying these words to you:

'You are my daughter/my son, the beloved one. I am delighted with you.'

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer

During the Time of the Coronavirus

Here is an adaptation of our traditional 'Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer' for the time of the coronavirus.

*O God, we thank you for the life of Blessed Edmund Rice.
He opened his heart to Christ present and appealing to
him in the poor.*

*He lived through times of revolution, disease, and famine.
May we follow his example of faith and generosity during
this time of the coronavirus pandemic.*

*Grant us the courage and compassion of Blessed Edmund,
as we seek to support one another, protect the vulnerable
and overcome this virus.*

*Bring those who have died into the fulness of your love in
eternal life. Comfort the bereaved. Grant health to those
who are sick.*

*Bless health care personnel and all essential workers who
bring healing and hope to people at this time.*

We make this prayer through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.





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EDMUND RICE WORK AND MISSION



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

What was it like for the young Edmund Rice to leave his native Callan and travel to Waterford, where he would be apprenticed to his wealthy merchant uncle, Michael Rice? Here he would learn the skills of trade and business. Like most young adults he would have to make his way in the world.

A biographer says the following:

'From the memories which survive of his early years in Waterford, Edmund Rice certainly emerges as a young man who knew how to enjoy life. We learn of his fondness for stylish clothes; his skill as a horseman; his love of boating... his interest in excursions and other outdoor activities, as well as his enjoyment of dancing and the pleasure he took in singing.'

(A.L. O'Toole CFC, Edmund Ignatius Rice – A Spiritual Profile, Vol 1, 29, The Burleigh Press, Bristol, 1984).

By 1787, he was a successful businessman, with his own residence in Ballybricken, outside the walls of the old city of Waterford. He fell in love and married Mary Elliott.



They both looked forward to a bright future ahead.

However, tragedy struck in 1789, when Mary died in childbirth. Edmund was left a young widower with a baby daughter.

This devastating experience for any young man would eventually lead to a spiritual turning point in Edmund's life.



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EDMUND RICE WORK AND MISSION

Reflect on the moments of joy and sorrow in your own life story...on the loves and the losses and the new beginnings. What have you learned in the difficult times?

How can we connect with and support those who are suffering at this time of the coronavirus?

SCRIPTURE

John 11: 32 -36 ff – Jesus meets Mary, the sister of Lazarus

'Master!', she said. 'If only you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died!' When Jesus saw her crying, and the Judaeans who had come with her crying, he was deeply stirred in his spirit and very troubled.

'Where have you laid him?' he asked.

'Master', they said, 'come and see!'

Jesus burst into tears.

'Look', said the Judaeans, 'see how much he loved him!'

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer During the time of the Coronavirus.





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MAY

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EDMUND RICE LEADING WITH FAITH IN THE FUTURE



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

Edmund Rice on the sunny days and during the stormy times had a profound faith in God's providence.

Some of the key sayings that have come down to us from him attest to this:

'Providence is our inheritance.'

'Be intent on prayer and whatever may happen will turn to our good.'

'Have courage, the seed will grow in the children's hearts later on'

'If we were only to know the merit and value of going from one street to another, to serve a neighbour for the love of God, we should prize it more than gold or silver.'

He brought into his first school in New Street, Waterford, the pragmatic approach of the businessman. The relationship between staff and pupils was a mentoring one – like that between the master craftsman and the apprentice. His approach to Christianity was also eminently practical. He would have agreed with the maxim of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism:

Do all the good you can, by all means you can, in all the ways you can, in all places you can, at all times you can, to all people you can, as long as ever you can.

His spirituality was thoroughly Catholic – attending Mass, praying before the Blessed Sacrament, reading the Scriptures and the traditional Irish devotions to Mary and to praying the Rosary.

In these elements of prayers and gospel service, he found the strength to live with faith and confidence in difficult times.

May these elements also inspire us as Presentation Family and Presentation School Communities today.



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EDMUND RICE LEADING WITH FAITH IN THE FUTURE

SCRIPTURE

MARK 4: 37 – 41. Jesus calms a storm

A big windstorm blew up. The waves beat on the boat and it quickly began to fill. Jesus, however, was asleep on a cushion in the stern.

They woke him up.

'Teacher!' they said to him, 'We're going down! Don't you care?'

He got up, scolded the wind, and said to the sea, 'Silence! Shut up!'

The wind did and there was a flat calm.

Then he said to them, 'Why are you scared? Don't you believe yet?'

Great fear stole over them. 'Who is this?' they said to each other.

Even the wind and the sea do what he says!'

Reflect on the storms in your own life.

Who has been there for you at these times?

How do faith and community help?

What lessons does Edmund Rice teach us on faith which can help us through these times?

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER



CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer During the Time of the Coronavirus.



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FEAST OF BLESSED EDMUND RICE



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STAY CONNECTED TO L.E.A.F.

If you wish to be added to our mailing list please send your contact details to:

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Happy Feast of Blessed Edmund Rice!

**Deo gratias!
Moladh go deo le Dia!**

Give thanks to God!



*"Tonight before falling asleep
think about when we will return to the street.
When we hug again,
when all the shopping together will seem like a party.
Let's think about when the coffees will return to the bar, the small talk,
the photos close to each other.
We think about when it will be all a memory but normalcy will seem an
unexpected and beautiful gift.
We will love everything that has so far seemed futile to us.
Every second will be precious.
Swims at the sea, the sun until late, sunsets, toasts, laughter.
We will go back to laughing together.
Strength and courage.
See you soon!" #Papafrancesco #restateacasa #pope #popefrancis*