



Volume 3 Issue 1

February 2010

**Special points of Interest:**

- Book launch of "ORDINARY COURAGE" by Donna Mulhearn
- "A Chance to See a New Face of God" Br Peter Thrupp
- Edmund Rice Oceania Regional Coordinators Meeting Perth WA
- ERISJ accepts invitation from Aboriginal Elders to become a major partner in one of the largest Aboriginal run Projects in WA history
- Sundowner CBC Fremantle March 15th 2010



# Edmund Rice - Networking WA

## ERN BOOK LAUNCH MARCH 2 2010

### INVITATION

*Edmund Rice Network Western Australia  
invites you to the*

### BOOK LAUNCH

of

### "ORDINARY COURAGE"

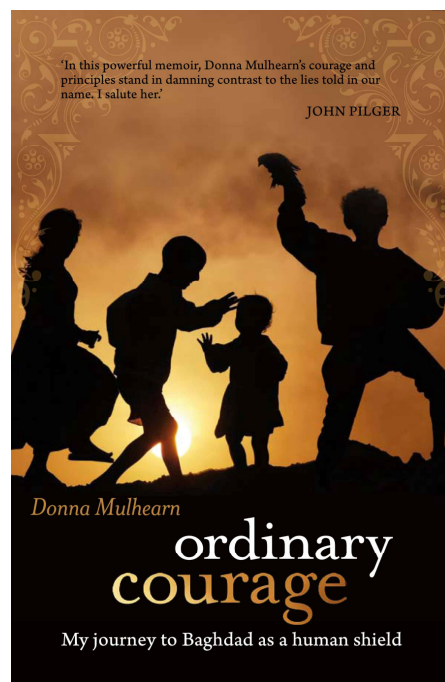
*written by Donna Mulhearn*

*Edmund Rice Network Regional Coordinator NSW  
at*

*Westcourt*

**Tuesday March 2nd 2010 7pm**

***ALL ARE WELCOME!***



This is one woman's account of finding the ordinary courage to fulfil her purpose, no matter what the odds. One day she heard something radical, a call to action that would change her course and her life forever. A man on the radio was appealing for human shields in Iraq – volunteers to deter the 'Coalition of the Willing' from attacking Baghdad.

Despite protests from concerned family and friends, Donna soon found herself travelling from Sydney to Baghdad. There she joined hundreds of shields from all over the world who formed small teams to protect major sites—power stations, water treatment plants, communication centres—that were crucial to the life of innocent people. Even when Saddam's statue toppled and the Coalition claimed victory, her challenges did not end.

Donna's story is exceptional, brave and full of conviction. It shows that by being true to yourself you can transform not only one life, but many.

Donna Mulhearn is a former journalist and political adviser. After becoming a human shield in 2003, she returned to Iraq as a humanitarian aid worker to set up a shelter for street kids and support refugee families. She has faced trial and prison time for breaking into Pine Gap US military base in December 2005 to do a 'Citizen's Inspection' for suspected terrorist activity with five other Christian pacifists. The goal was to highlight the central role the base played in the war in Iraq and challenge the Government's definition of terrorism. Donna is currently a writer and speaker on non-violence, activism and contemplative spirituality and works with the Edmund Rice Network in Sydney promoting engagement in social justice issues, particularly amongst young people. Featured on ABC's *Australian Story* program, Donna is also a postgraduate student at Sydney University's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and describes herself as a 'pilgrim and storyteller.'

**Come along on the 2nd March and meet Donna, enjoy some light refreshments and hear her story first hand.**



# GREETINGS FROM —BR PETER THRUPP

## *A chance to see a new face of God*

The New Year is now well and truly with us and the first thing that strikes me is that I can not quite take in how quickly 2009 has gone. My resolution is, as it always is, to become the best person I can possibly be. Though this is my resolution every year I still hang on to it because it's the only one I take seriously. I would like to think I am making some progress each year no matter how small.

The last half of 2009 found me recuperating from the various ailments that the Philippine environment has so graciously bestowed upon me. Among which Typhoid fever and Dengue fever were the worst. It is said I did not take enough precautions and this may well be true. The tropical weather was not always benign and at times it was downright oppressive. But I would not change anything that was experienced while in this extraordinary country. I loved every moment of my time there. This is not to say it was easy - far from it. If it is God's will I would love to return one day.

Brother Pinto suggested that we go not only to serve where we felt we could best share Edmund's Charism and our own individual talents and skills but also, and this may well be the primary reason, to discover a new face of God. To this end a community of four brothers was set up in Kabankalan on the Island of Negros in 2005 and several years later another was founded in Hilongos on the Island of Leyte. The Kabankalan Community was made up of Brs. Rod Ellyard, John Moodie, Neil Langdon and Peter Hardiman. The Hilongos community was made up of Brs. Frank Perkins, Carl Sherrin and myself. We three returned to classroom work and found the challenge invigorating. Entering into the life of Saint Teresa's School presented some difficulties but I am pleased to say our contribution to the life of the School was most appreciated. We brought with us substantial funds which were used to improve the school infrastructure and add some vitally needed resources thanks to the generosity of the Australian Schools and many of our family and friends.

After two happy and fruitful years I was recalled to Australia due to ill health in late May 2009. Frank and Carl are continuing their good work in Hilongos today. Rod and John are the only two brothers left at Kabankalan. The obvious question to be asked now is, 'What does the future hold for this mission which started with 7 brothers and is now down to 4 brothers?' It would be a great disappointment to the Philippino People if we were to pull out after such a short time. Our presence there has reaped many blessings for us and given valuable support to a very poor part of the Philippines which to a large extent has been forgotten by the Administration in Manila. Maybe the future is to be found in encouraging the winder Edmund Rice family to get involved in this part of the world through a volunteer system. There has been success in this area already with a 12 months posting to Kabankalan of Joe and Anne Stynes from NSW.

I felt that in our two years in Hilongos we had made a difference in the lives of the young people we chose to serve and they in turn had welcomed us and accepted us with the hospitality only the Philippine people know how to give. Towards the end of my stay I had established a summer School where 70 young children, not attending School for various reasons, turned up on the first day. A new missionary endeavour was born - Carl continues to assist these children today.

From the two communities we have had three brothers return to Australia through ill health. None of these brothers wanted to leave their post and would have preferred to return to the Philippines had circumstances allowed. The illness to my way of thinking was the result of the fact that all of us are well into our twilight years. The weather is tropical and seems to take its toll on those not used to such severe climate conditions. Maybe this mission is for younger men and women.

The people are very happy to have missionaries from Australia in their country and have a custom of showering on missionaries in general tremendous respect and love; they even may be accused of spoiling us. Priests are also treated with a similar affection. The population is 85% Catholic and has a culture which though unique and exciting, has been influenced by the Spanish for 300 years and later the Americans for 100 years. Another factor influencing life in the Philippines is the presence of a small, though powerful group belonging to the Muslim religion. They mainly live in the south of the country and they do not see 'eye to eye' with the government resulting in a never ending struggle for their own independence.

The poverty in this country is just mind blowing and it is to the poor that we are called to serve. Certainly we have benefitted and been enriched by being among them and continue to grow and be enlivened by their delightful acceptance of us as Religious Brothers. This mission must be maintained if at all possible as it is very much what our founder Edmund Rice was on about. His Charism shines forth in his followers most clearly when they accept the invitation to go to the margins of our society and it is here that we will find a new face of God.

**Peter Thrupp (cfc)**

Although Peter has recovered from Typhoid and Dengue Fever he has been told to be careful and follow doctors advice. He has been appointed to the Broome Community in WA for the next three years. Best wishes in your new venture and God bless Peter.



Rod Ellyard & Peter Thrupp



Peter Thrupp

## **Edmund Rice Oceania Regional Coordinators Meeting Perth February 2010**

The Edmund Rice Regional Coordinators first meeting for 2010 is being held in Perth from February 28th to March 3rd.

Come along to the launch of Donna's book - 'Ordinary Courage' - at Westcourt on March 2nd and meet them ,their boss Br Steve McLaughlin, Director of Networking, Communications and Development and Dr Mary Murphy Director of Formation.

**Edmund Rice Network Sundowner March 15th 2010 CBC Fremantle 5.30pm**

## EDMUND RICE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE FREMANTLE



### ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

*Nidja Nyungar Boodjar Noonook Nyininy.*

**(This is Nyungar country; you are sitting in it.)**



The Institute has accepted an invitation from Aboriginal elders to become a major partner in one of the largest Aboriginal-run projects in Western Australian history. The project straddles eight major fields, with the first (Cultural Corridors) being a juvenile justice diversionary program. Seen together, the eight projects aim at nothing less than the full revival of Aboriginal people in Western Australia, as well as new forms of partnership with, and learning from, Aboriginal people by the rest of the population. Initiated within Nyongar Western Australia, these projects have built so much momentum and excitement during the past 12 months that there are already suggestions that they 'go Statewide'. Stay tuned for much more information in coming issues of Living Justice, and on our website.

The **Statewide Cultural Corridors Project** is one of the most important indigenous self-advancement projects in Australian history.

This initiative of Aboriginal elders and partner organisations works holistically across key dimensions of Aboriginal advancement: diversionary programs for Aboriginal youth offenders, vocational education and training, leadership development programs, an alternate economic base for indigenous WA, and building understanding of Aboriginal culture among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

The Edmund Rice Institute for Social Justice is one of the principal partner organisations. The Statewide Cultural Corridors Project secretariat is based at the ERISJ.

Features include:

- § Aboriginal-led
- § Cultural and language revival
- § Offender Diversion and Rehabilitation;
- § Employment and Training
- § Land Care and Indigenous Heritage and Environmental Protection and Care;
- § Tourism; and
- § Aboriginal Enterprises, including medicinal uses of plants and carbon sequestration on Aboriginal land

Our work with Aboriginal Australia includes:

- **Aboriginal Leadership Program.** Aboriginal leaders assist us to deliver a program that builds the skills of current and emerging Aboriginal leaders;
- The Program will occupy most Tuesdays at the Institute, commencing the first week of March, 2010. This large and exciting initiative will be unveiled on our website in March 2009;
- Consistent with Professor Patrick Dodson's call for an Australian 'Post-Reconciliation Dialogue', we **bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together** to discuss how we might together build a new tomorrow (see also [The Kimberley Institute](#));
- Our **Indigenous Leadership Research Project** documents significant accomplishments within indigenous communities in Australia, NZ, Canada and the USA. The intention is to record success stories, identifying 'what is working'. We will collect these resources to:
  - disseminate 'best practice' developments between indigenous people;
  - broaden the knowledge of policy actors of all races; and
  - promote public understanding of positive parts of the journey of indigenous peoples. This is not about a rose-coloured view of existing problems. Rather, it is to convey that the glass is half-full as well as half-empty.
- **Awareness-raising:** Through our Immersions, our advocacy and several ERISJ Certificates, we invite non-Aboriginal people to view the world through Aboriginal eyes.

Please visit [www.erisj.com.au](http://www.erisj.com.au) in coming weeks when many more details will be added.

### **March 13 2010—1 day Intensive**     **Aid or Development; Charity or Social Justice?**

Presenter: Janeen Murphy is Global Education Advisor for Caritas Australia. She has worked in this position for 8 years, including working with Caritas partners 'on the ground' in Uganda, Timor-Leste (East Timor), Cambodia and India. Janeen runs education programs in schools and higher education institutions, providing pathways to engage with justice issues. [admin@erisj.org.au](mailto:admin@erisj.org.au)

# INVITATION

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**Edmund Rice Network**

## SUNDOWNER

**March 15 2010**

**A Celebration of the last twelve months  
and an expression of support  
and inspiration for 2010  
and beyond...**

**Relax over a glass of wine or a cuppa**

**Enjoy the scrumptious food provided**



**Mix & Mingle with colleagues and old friends**

**Your presence is valued  
and guides our shared way forward**

**CBC Fremantle  
51 Ellen Street  
Fremantle  
5.30 to 7.30 pm**



*Wishing you a peaceful  
New Year and all the  
blessings of the Christ  
Child in 2010*



### A New Year Prayer

Oh God of new beginnings and wonderful surprises, thank you for the gift of a new year.

May it be a time of grace for us, a time to grow in faith and love, a time to renew our commitment to following your Son, Jesus.

May it be a year of blessing, a time to cherish family and friends, a time to renew our efforts at work, a time to embrace our faith more fully.

Walk with us please in every day and every hour of this new year, that the light of Christ might shine through us in spite of our weaknesses and failings.

Above all, may we remember that we are pilgrims on the sacred path to you.

Cathedral Parish of St Agnes New York USA

**Thank you  
to everyone who  
sent information  
in for this issue.  
Please keep the  
news coming in  
for the next issue.  
Blessings,  
Jill**

**Online link:  
[Christianbrothers.com  
.au/ernwa](http://Christianbrothers.com.au/ernwa)**

**With thanks to Br  
Berkeley Fitzhardinge**

### Edmund Rice Network Sundowner March 15th 2010 CBC Fremantle 5.30pm

The position of Edmund Rice Network (ERN) Co-ordinator is to aid the Oceania Networking and Development team in maintaining contact with individuals associated with the Christian Brothers and the Edmund Rice Network in Western Australia; to keep them informed and to encourage participation in future endeavours of the Christian Brothers Oceania and associated entities. I can be contacted on mobile phone **0414 629 218** or as below.

**Jill Parker Direct Line: 08 9365 2841**

**ERN Regional Co-ordinator WA.**

**JCParker@edmundrice.org**

**Westcourt**

**PO BOX 1129**

**Bentley DC WA 6983**

