National Director – Identity and Liberating Education

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

Applicants for the position of National Director – Identity and Liberating Education are asked to ensure that the following documentation is submitted by the due date:

1) A one page letter addressed to the Executive Director, outlining reasons for your interest in the position.
2) A statement of no more than five pages addressing each of the Selection Criteria.
3) Four completed written referee reports provided to EREA, one of whom must be the applicant’s current employer and one from the applicants Parish Priest.
4) A current Curriculum Vitae.

Referee Report forms for completion by professional referees and the Parish Priest are available from the EREA website along with the Information for Applicants.

Please note:
Applications and all Referee Reports must be received by 4.00pm Thursday August 4, 2016

Applications should be addressed to:

Email: The Executive Director
recruitment@erea.edu.au

Post: The Executive Director
Edmund Rice Education Australia
PO Box 91
Richmond VIC 3121
Selection Criteria
NATIONAL DIRECTOR – IDENTITY AND LIBERATING EDUCATION
EREA National Office

The selection criteria for candidates include:

1. An excellent understanding of and demonstrated commitment to the mission of Catholic schools.

2. A capacity to lead school communities in the development of the Edmund Rice values and Charter.

3. A personal faith commitment which drives the understanding of mission in Catholic schools.

4. Proven leadership in mission development in a Catholic school or ministry, preferably at Principal level.

5. Successful leadership experience including team formation and development, project management and policy development.

6. A demonstrated capacity for a leadership style characterized by collaboration, accessibility, resilience, decisiveness and achievement of outcomes.

7. High level communication and interpersonal skills including public speaking and presentation, negotiation, influence and persuasion.

8. High level coordination, organizational, time management, project management and information and communications technology skills.

9. Appropriate professional qualifications, including a higher degree in a discipline relating to theology, religious education, education, leadership or management.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT SPECIFIC TO THE POSITION OF NATIONAL DIRECTOR – IDENTITY AND LIBERATING EDUCATION

An attractive remuneration package will be offered to the successful applicant inclusive of base salary, 10% superannuation, annual leave loading and fully maintained employer provided motor vehicle. The appointment is for 5 years with the option of a further five years, subject to a successful review.
Position Description
National Director Identity and Liberating Education

Reporting to: Executive Director
Team: National Directors
Location: Richmond, Victoria

1.0 Mission
Employees of Edmund Rice Education Australia help to promote a quality Catholic education to the students in our schools, embracing the message of the Gospel and the charism of Edmund Rice.

2.0 Purpose
The National Director Identity and Liberating Education provides expertise and direction around values, vision, mission, charism, formation and renewal in the direction and operation of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA).

3.0 Key Working Relationships
The position requires positive and harmonious working relationships with:

- National Directors
- Leadership Team
- The Identity Team
- School Principals
- School Identity Leaders
- Directors Regional Support
- EREA Board Relationships and Education Committee
- Director – Youth+
- Oceania Province and Edmund Rice Network staff
- Chair of the EREA Board
- President EREA Council

4.0 Key Responsibilities
- Planning and provision of formation for staff and Boards
- School Renewals
- Providing leadership to Identity Leaders in schools
- Supporting positive relationships with Oceania Province and the Edmund Rice Network
- Developing and coordinating a network of Associate Schools
- Overseeing the implementation of Justice and Peace initiatives including immersions
• Supporting schools in the development and implementation of the lived expression of the Charter
• Monitoring and providing a link between the EREA Board and Leadership Team and the operations of Youth+
• Providing leadership and supervision for staff in the Identity Directorate
• Contributing to the National Directors and Leadership Teams
• Contributing to the EREA Board Relationships and Education Committees.

4.1 Shared Responsibilities
As a member of the Executive team of EREA, the National Director Identity and Liberating Education shares responsibility for the overall leadership and strategic directions of EREA. This joint leadership role includes responsibility for:
• Pastoral support for Staff
• Professional Learning for Staff
• Co-responsibility
• Growth Strategies
• Advocacy
• Resourcing
• Critical Incident management
• Implementing strategies identified in the EREA Strategic Directions document
• Monitoring the effectiveness of outcomes identified in the Strategic Directions document
• Working with EREA Board subcommittees to carry out the work of the Board.

5.0 Additional Duties
• Any other duties as reasonably requested by the Executive Director. These additional duties will generally be mutually agreed by all parties.
National Director Identity and Liberating Education

Conditions of Employment

Remuneration

An attractive remuneration package in line with the EREA National Framework for Remuneration will be offered which includes an annual leave loading at 17.5%, superannuation at 10% and the option of a fully maintained Motor Vehicle which will form part of the Total Employment Cost.

For further information on the full remuneration package please email Michael Horsley, Director Staff Services at michael.horsley@erea.edu.au

Tenure

A five year contract is offered with the provision of a second five year contract subject to successful review.

Technology/Communication Provisions

EREA will provide the National Director with a mobile phone and laptop computer in order to fulfil his/her duties. Such items remain the property of EREA and should be adequately maintained by the National Director.

Salary Packaging

The National Director may elect to enter into a salary package arrangement which will be in accordance with guidelines established by EREA. Southgate Salary Packaging Services, Paywise and Selectus are EREA’s current providers.

Leave Entitlements

The National Director will have a sick leave entitlement of 10 days per annum and long service leave entitlements are in accordance with EREA policy.

Long Service Leave portability is covered under the Intrastate/Interstate Catholic schools’ portability agreement. Sick leave is only portable between Catholic schools in Victoria, between EREA schools nationally or between EREA schools and EREA.

The National Director is entitled to 20 days Annual Leave subject to the approval of the Executive Director.

Professional Renewal Leave

Professional Renewal Leave shall be provided in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Employer. Ten weeks is available in each five year Contract period subject to application approval by the Executive Director.
In 1802, Edmund Rice commenced his first school for boys in Waterford, Ireland. Joined by men who became known as the Christian Brothers, Edmund extended his mission of providing education to poor youth throughout Ireland and beyond. From 1868, beginning under the inspirational leadership of Brother Ambrose Treacy, schools and orphanages were established throughout Australia and New Zealand. The Gospel-centred charism of Blessed Edmund has continued to inspire Christian Brothers and members of the Edmund Rice Network in their ministry.

In 2004, the Province Leaders of the Christian Brothers in Australia proclaimed the Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition, a document that captured the character and culture of our schools. Challenging the schools, their leaders, staff, students and families to be faithful to this character, the Charter was seen as a ‘living document’ which ‘will continue to evolve through review and reflection as the demands of our changing times are read and interpreted in the light of the unchanging Gospel’ (Charter, 2004).

The Charter together with Foundations, Formation, and Renewal describe our distinct, though not unique, identity as Edmund Rice Education Australia. The Charter provides a practical expression of this identity and so is of crucial use in decision making, planning and review.

Now, a revised Charter is being proclaimed. In the light of several years of reflection and wide consultation, the Charter uses four touchstones* to describe the culture of an authentic Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

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

The Council of Edmund Rice Australia proclaims this Charter and invites its implementation by all in Edmund Rice Education Australia.

Edmund Rice Education Australia Council
22nd August 2011

* A touchstone is a fundamental or quintessential feature.

In earlier times a touchstone was used to judge the purity of precious metals. A streak left on the touchstone was compared with a streak made by the pure metal. Hence authenticity was verified.
Our Story

God’s living presence

Since the beginning of time God has been present. This presence was expressed poetically in the biblical creation stories and can be found in humanity’s modern understanding of the value of creation and responsibility to live in respectful harmony with the earth. Over the millennia, life on earth developed to a point where it could reflect upon God’s presence in history leading men and women to seek to understand the “breadth and length and height and depth” of God’s love (Eph 3:18). They also sought to live in accordance with this understanding and to share this gift with others.

This story of discovery is encapsulated in the story of a people who responded to a call to listen and be God’s people. Their wisdom brought to the generations a concept of a God who is One and who desires all humanity to be one also. It was into this story that Jesus was born.

Jesus Christ

Empowered by the Spirit, Jesus named and inaugurated his mission in the synagogue at Nazareth drawing on the wisdom of the prophet Isaiah:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’ (Luke 4:18-19)

Nurtured by his Jewish tradition in this way and inspired by the Spirit, Jesus proclaimed a message of justice, peace and solidarity, especially with the poor and marginalised. The challenge Jesus issued in Nazareth and enacted in his ministry – the challenge to include those who are so often excluded because of their situation in life - has continued in the lives of his followers down the ages. It is the same challenge that inspired Edmund Rice to “open his whole heart to Christ present and appealing to him in the poor” (Christian Brothers’ Charism Statement, 1982).

Edmund Rice

Born in Callan, Ireland, in 1762, Edmund came to the bustling city port of Waterford as a young man. He was talented and energetic and soon became very wealthy. Married to Mary Elliot, in 1789 he experienced her tragic death soon after she gave birth to their daughter Mary. Deeply saddened by her loss, Edmund entered a time of mourning. As his daughter continued to open the depths of his love, his relationship with God deepened. In his own brokenness, he was moved with compassion to recognise the brokenness of those around him. He entered more deeply into their struggle and found in the story of Jesus the call to liberation that is at the heart of what Jesus preached and in which his church is engaged. The Ireland of Edmund’s day was an unjust place where many lived in poverty and social structures deeply oppressed the majority of the population. In 1802 he set up a free school for boys living in poverty. His aim was to promote an education that recognised the dignity of each individual and thus he sought to liberate them from their ignorance of God of their Catholic faith, while at the same time empowering them with an education which would enable them to rise from the demeaning poverty and sense of hopelessness in which they were trapped. Thus Edmund sought to liberate individuals and indeed to free his society from oppression.

Christian Brothers

Other men were drawn to Edmund and his work of justice for those made poor. They lived together in community and were professed as Brothers, along with Edmund, in 1808. By 1825 Edmund Rice and his 30 Brothers were educating free of charge over 5,500 boys in 12 different towns and cities. Many boys were also being clothed and fed. The year 1825 also saw the expansion of the Brothers’ response to God’s call to provide the same liberating education for the poor in countries beyond Ireland, including the establishment in due course of over 120 schools in Australia. Christian Brothers and other members of the Edmund Rice Network are now working in over 30 countries across the globe. They are continuing to discern the signs of the times and respond to the needs of the poor and the earth, while working towards a just and sustainable future for all. The work of the Brothers continues to inspire all involved in our schools.

Edmund Rice Education Australia

The Christian Brothers story in Australia is a vibrant and creative response to the educational needs of the day. The formation of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) by the Christian Brothers in 2007 continues and renews this creative response. EREA, as part of the mission of the Catholic Church, is charged with the responsibility for the governance of the Christian Brothers’ schools throughout Australia, to ensure that Edmund’s charism lives on in this work at a time when the Brothers are being called to new directions within a shared vision.
As Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition, we aspire to be faithful to these four touchstones:

**Liberating Education**
We open hearts and minds, through quality teaching and learning experiences, so that through critical reflection and engagement each person is hope-filled and free to build a better world for all.

**Gospel Spirituality**
We invite all people into the story of Jesus and strive to make his message of compassion, justice and peace a living reality within our community.

**Inclusive Community**
Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.

**Justice and Solidarity**
We are committed to justice and peace for all, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection that calls us to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalised and the Earth itself.
Liberating Education

We open hearts and minds, through quality teaching and learning experiences, so that through critical reflection and engagement each person is hope-filled and free to build a better world for all.

Expression

A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition:

1. encourages all members of the school community to work to the best of their ability, to realise their potential and to strive for equity and excellence;

2. serves the needs of each person, providing teaching and learning experiences that are authentic, relevant, dynamic and creative;

3. provides a learning culture that enables students to experience success within a safe and healthy environment;

4. provides a holistic education integrating faith with culture and learning while giving an appreciation of the need to strive for the greater good of all society;

5. challenges all to prophetic leadership within the school community and beyond;

6. gives priority in the allocation of resources to provide services for students with particular needs;

7. enables students to experience and value a critical awareness of justice and peace issues through the curriculum, service and solidarity learning, environmental practices and the culture of the school;

8. promotes ongoing renewal by providing opportunities for reflective practice, formation and professional development.

Gospel Spirituality

We invite people into the story of Jesus and strive to make his message of compassion, justice and peace a living reality within our community.

Expression

A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition:

1. lives and grows as a faith-sharing community by fostering a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ;

2. celebrates as a Eucharistic community, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ;

3. nurtures and encourages the spiritual growth of each person through reflection, prayer, symbols, sacred stories, rituals and sacraments;

4. models the Gospel values of forgiveness and reconciliation by the manner in which conflict is resolved;

5. provides religious education in line with Diocesan guidelines and faith formation experiences as fundamental components of a Catholic School curriculum;

6. continues the legacy of the Christian Brothers by calling its community to discipleship and playing an integral part in the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church;

7. provides formation opportunities for its members in the mystery of God in all creation, the spirit of Jesus, the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice, the inspiration of the Christian Brothers, their own sacred story and their call to mission;

8. recognises and acts upon the central place of the Gospel commitment to the marginalised, through a preferential option for the poor;

9. is engaged in inter-faith dialogue and respects the spirituality authentically lived by those who come from other religious traditions;
Inclusive Community
Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.

Expression
A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition:

1. provides pastoral care that nurtures the dignity of each person as a child formed in the image of God;
2. demonstrates a preferential option for the poor by standing in solidarity with those who are powerless and marginalised, and strives to provide access to those who otherwise would not seek enrolment;
3. is sensitive to the economic situation of each of its families, designing school programs to empower all to participate with dignity and confidence;
4. promotes social inclusion and views diversity as beneficial to a liberating education;
5. works in collaboration and partnership with the local Church;
6. acknowledges the service and contribution of the Christian Brothers and welcomes them into the life of the school;
7. acknowledges the primary role of parents and guardians in the growth and development of the child and provides opportunities for their participation in the life of the school;
8. recognises the traditional ownership and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples of Australia, and welcomes them into its community;
9. looks beyond itself to contribute, according to its means, to the overall growth and development of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition and to Edmund Rice ministries in Australia and overseas.

Justice and Solidarity
We are committed to justice and peace for all, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection that calls us to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalised and the Earth itself.

Expression
A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition:

1. develops a curriculum that integrates the themes of justice and peace, underpinned by Catholic Social Teaching;
2. adopts prophetic stances in the light of Gospel values and is involved in advocacy for just causes;
3. promotes participation in service and solidarity learning programs in partnership with those on the margins;
4. seeks to provide opportunities for involvement in immersion programs in which students and staff form relationships, work with and learn from those on the margins;
5. is committed to working with and walking alongside the Indigenous peoples of Australia, advocating justice and promoting reconciliation;
6. demonstrates a deep respect for and partnership with the environment, promotes eco-justice and works towards a sustainable and regenerative future for all creation;
7. recognises that its members are part of a global community and actively supports the development of all humanity;
8. nurtures a culture of critical reflection and prayerful discernment in justice and peace issues.
The Charter will guide schools in the quest towards greater authenticity as Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition. Each school is challenged to be faithful to the four touchstones and to reflect regularly on their embodiment in all aspects of school. The Charter will be a foundation document in all planning, policy and practice; it will be a focus for formation and reflection.

The School Renewal process will complement and validate the reflection of schools. Through School Renewal the governing body of Edmund Rice Education Australia will accredit each school as an authentic Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

As a living document this Charter will continue to evolve. It will be reviewed in 2016.

Live, Jesus, in our hearts forever.
THE GOOD SEED WILL GROW
A Formation Framework for Edmund Rice Communities in Oceania
Dear Formation personnel,

Everything contained within this foundational Formation Framework reflects what we, as a Congregation Leadership Team are sharing with our Brothers around the world. The present Pope is also giving voice to much of this in promoting a Church that aligns itself on the side of the marginalised of the world.

There are two elements that I would stress to you in your role as the designers and facilitators of Formation in your region of the world. The first is that as each dominant culture begins to open itself more to those new arrivals coming to its shores, it will discover a face of God that it never knew, a face that will challenge its values and way of living. This is where inter-religious dialogue will be at its best.

I believe more and more that Jesus was never about a new religion, but about a change of culture. This has been at the heart of the Congregation Leadership Team’s efforts since 2002: to change the culture of the Congregation. I am so affirmed to discover that it is precisely what Pope Francis is about as well. And this was precisely what Jesus was calling us to. This is the deep meaning of “Repent, the Kingdom is at hand” — the heart of metanoia.

The second element is really discovering anew the story of Jesus. Our role is to help people to move towards a self-discovery of Jesus as God via relationship with Jesus as man. Jesus was showing us the way to be fully human, and promoting fullness of life as opening us most wholly to the Mystery we name God. Modern scholarship is discovering more and more the implications of the human Jesus on his society. To read the Gospels this way is so very enriching and sheds fresh light on much of our faith journey. This is where the challenge will lie: to develop people who can share this vision of Jesus.

May this framework provide you with the wisdom and inspiration to continue to enrich the lives of those you serve in the name of Jesus and Edmund.

Br Philip Pinto cfc
Congregation Leader
January 2014

In presenting this Formation Framework we acknowledge the First Nation Peoples of Oceania and the part that they have played in shaping our understanding of the region and its place in the world.

Formation experiences are a journey, an encounter with another. This journey calls us to sit with many experiences and to make sense of our own mission in the context of daily life. It is in the patient and respectful listening we are gifted with and are called to honour the sacredness of another. It is in the stillness that we discover ourselves. Donella Brown

Naku te rourou nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi – With your basket and my basket the people will live.

This Maori proverb invites co-operation and sharing of resources for mutual benefit of all creation. Co-creating and co-evolving is central to our understanding of God, calling us to imagine and expand a vision of creation that offers fullness of life for all. What do you have in your basket? Cathy Harrison

A message from the Congregation of Christian Brothers

The Oceania Province Leadership Team and the Edmund Rice Education Australia Council proclaim this Formation Framework and invite its use by all Edmund Rice Communities in Oceania. 19 May, 2014
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The Framework draws upon the core documentation and experience of Christian Brothers Oceania Province and Edmund Rice Education Australia as well as the insights gained through community dialogue about formation conducted during 2013. It grows out of a strong and vibrant partnership between these two entities which has provided quality formation experiences across Oceania since 2007. It is also informed by the current thinking of the Congregation of the Christian Brothers as expressed in Our Way into the Future. Finally it draws inspiration from Scripture and the Tradition of the Catholic Church, particularly as currently expressed by Pope Francis.

In addition to drawing together our two former frameworks, this Framework seeks to reimagine the way we look at formation for mission in our communities. It takes as its starting point Our Sacred Story and then explores how the Dynamic of Formation emerges from and continues to animate this story.

This Framework is neither exhaustive nor inclusive of the full depth and breadth of formation. As such it intends primarily to address the formation needs of people working in Edmund Rice communities. These communities exist as part of the wider Catholic Church as well as the “community of kin” that is life on Earth.1 In light of this we acknowledge that people will seek and experience formation outside of and beyond our communities as well as within them. It is our hope, however, that all within our communities will find a place where their own personal gifts might contribute to the greater good of all.

As believers, we also feel close to those who do not consider themselves part of any religious tradition, yet sincerely seek the truth, goodness and beauty which we believe have their highest expression and source in God. We consider them as precious allies in the commitment to defending human dignity, in building peaceful coexistence between peoples and in protecting creation.

(Pope Francis, 2013, Evangeli Gaudium, #257)
AN INVITATION TO USE THIS FRAMEWORK

THIS FRAMEWORK PROVIDES A STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS FORMATION IN EDMUND RICE COMMUNITIES ACROSS OCEANIA. IT IDENTIFIES THE KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR COMMUNAL UNDERSTANDING OF FORMATION, WHICH ENABLES US TO ENGAGE IN MISSION.

This Framework can be used to:
1/ Affirm and situate current formation experiences within the Framework;
2/ Shape formation plans for individuals, groups, networks and communities;
3/ Design new formation experiences to meet emerging and changing needs;
4/ Enable communities to create formation experiences tailored to their particular context;
5/ Enhance review and evaluation of existing formation experiences.

This Framework can be used by:
1/ Schools and entities governed by or associated with Edmund Rice Education Australia;
2/ Ministries governed by, sponsored by or affiliated with Christian Brothers Oceania Province;
3/ Christian Brothers and Christian Brothers communities;
4/ Individuals and groups inspired by the vision and mission of Edmund Rice.

This Framework will be supported by:
1/ Resources to support engagement, understanding and application;
2/ Processes and resources that support review and evaluation of current formation experiences;
3/ The creation of national, regional and local networking groups to enable the sharing of exemplary practice;
4/ The creation of learning circles to build the capacity of individuals and communities to use this framework.
Mission

Mission is the Mystery of the Divine, whom we name God, constantly at work in the movement of the Spirit, drawing all of creation towards the wholeness embodied in the life and teaching of Jesus. As participants in the creative work of God we are invited into this loving and life-giving relationship. Mission asks us to be consciously and compassionately present to the needs of the world, especially those made poor and marginalised. Authentic mission engagement sheds light on situations in which the dignity of life is being denied and offers instead God’s radical vision of wholeness. Mission invites us to work together for the good of all creation so that God’s vision is made real.

Charism

Charism provides a particular insight into mission. Though it historically emerges from the vision and experience of one person, ongoing re-imagining of charism expression helps shed a contemporary light on the life and teaching of Jesus. Charism has the power to draw people into the gospel vision of wholeness and love, giving a sense of direction and authenticity to mission engagement. Charism fosters a deeper understanding of and connection with communal identity, but only when it takes us beyond our immediate community to consider the good of all. Charism invites us to engage with all creation in a spirit of openness and generosity.

Deeply aware of the Father’s providential presence in his life, Edmund Rice was moved by the Holy Spirit to open his whole heart to Christ, present and appealing to him in the poor.

Christian Brothers Charism Statement, 1982

The joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts.

Vatican II, 1965, Gaudium et Spes, #1
Formation

Formation is a lifelong process that gifts us with a deeper awareness of our union with the Mystery of the Divine. In enabling us to deepen that union by reflection on the charism, formation helps us to identify those personal gifts which enable our fullest participation in mission. The dynamic of formation is relational, providing opportunities for individuals and communities to learn from one another in a spirit of mutuality and complementarity. The process of formation intentionally creates space for reflection, conversation and action that embodies and ignites a charism-inspired response to mission. Formation invites us to continually open our hearts and minds to the many possibilities of participating in this life-giving mission.

Effective formation methods address the whole person: emotions, imagination, will, heart, and mind. It is the whole person who ministers, so the whole person is the proper subject of formation.

USCCB, 2005, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, p. 33

Church

The purpose of the Church is to enable God’s mission. It is not an end in itself, but exists rather to show God to the world. At the heart of its identity is the life and teaching of Jesus. Taking inspiration in the example of Jesus, the charism of Edmund Rice is a gift to the Church and the world. The Church is called to be “good news” for others, especially those made poor and marginalised. We are invited in humility, integrity and simplicity to bring new life to the Church as we seek to engage in God’s mission.

I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures.

Pope Francis, 2013, Evangelii Gaudium, #49
Overview

The Visualisation of the Formation Framework has two parts:

1/ The Spiral, naming Our Sacred Story;
2/ The Sails, representing the Dynamic of Formation.

The Spiral

A spiral is a powerful representation of the spiritual journey, simultaneously looking inward and outward. Present throughout the natural world, it represents growth and the unfolding of creation in the story of the Universe. In Celtic tradition the spiral symbolises both divinity and infinity. Its open-endedness reminds us that life is a process that is both creative and ever-revealing.

In its entirety, The Spiral embodies the Mystery of the Divine, present in the unfolding of creation. Representing our ever emerging consciousness of this Mystery and this all embracing presence, the white strand of the spiral unfurls into life, infusing all space and time. This ushers forth new revelations of God in the life of Jesus, which in-turn inspires the response of Edmund. Our participation as co-creators invites us to bring ongoing life and contemporary form to this ever expanding story.
At the heart of Our Sacred Story is the Mystery of the Divine whom we name God.

The Visualisation of the Formation Framework

The sails of a windmill transform the energy of the wind into rotational energy, traditionally used for the milling of grain or the pumping of water. In recent times windmills have been used to generate clean renewable energy. The movement of the sails reminds us that life is a process that is both dynamic and transformational.

The Sails represent the three elements of the Dynamic of Formation:

Moved by the Spirit
- breathing life into all that we do

Alive in Relationship
- in solidarity with all life on earth

Called to Liberation
- agents of transformation in our world

Each element provides us with ways to interpret, integrate and to engage with Our Sacred Story in order to continue to bring that story to life. The Visualisation captures the continuous movement of The Sails emerging from and spiralling through Our Sacred Story.
The Mystery of the Divine

Eternally present in the unfolding of creation

1/ The expansive presence of the Mystery of the Divine is revealed in the story of the universe and the natural world in which we belong.

2/ The First Nation Peoples of Oceania experienced the Mystery of the Divine in their relationship with creation and expressed this in their stories, rituals and traditions.

3/ We have come to know this Mystery dwelling among us, through the witness of Jesus Christ and the Church that continues his mission.

4/ Our appreciation of God's presence has been further enriched by the wisdom of other religious traditions and modern science's offering of new awareness of the wonder, complexity, beauty and interdependence of the expanding and evolving Universe.

5/ Our relationship with the Mystery of the Divine deepens when we dare to imagine a vision of creation brought to wholeness and, with the open heartedness of Mary, risk participation in the creativity of life as God's partners.

The Life of Jesus

Incarnation of the love of God

1/ At the heart of a Christian understanding of God, and central to our identity as Edmund Rice communities, is the life and teaching of Jesus.

2/ Filled with the divine Spirit and formed within his Jewish tradition, Jesus lived and preached a gospel of love, compassion, liberation and peace.

3/ Jesus' life, words and actions emphasised God's love for all creation: a love that places widows, orphans, strangers, and those made poor at the centre of our attention.

4/ Recognising the centrality of relationship to the gospel vision, Jesus' followers formed communities that would become the Church, the continuation of his historically tangible reality.

5/ The followers of Jesus are invited to share his attitude of humility, emptying themselves in their humanity and opening themselves to live in solidarity with all life on this fragile planet (see Philippians 2:5-8).
The Response of Edmund

Answering the call of Jesus

1/ At the heart of Edmund's charism is his life experience and his response to the call of Jesus.

2/ Edmund experienced the intimacy of love and the pain of loss as a husband and father. His personal experience of suffering heightened his consciousness of the brokenness of others, just as his experience of love enabled him to respond compassionately.

3/ Edmund's response to those made poor and marginalised was in many ways ahead of its time, challenging prejudices and mindsets which unjustly maintained the status of some at the expense of others.

4/ Edmund used education as a means of providing the young people of Waterford, Ireland with greater access to the knowledge and skills that would allow them to participate more equitably in society.

5/ Attracted by this liberating call, others soon joined Edmund in brotherhood. Communities of Brothers spread throughout Ireland and the rest of the world giving new life to Edmund's charism.

Our Participation

The story continues

1/ At the heart of our identity as Edmund Rice communities is the call to be a presence in today's world that, inspired by our founding charism, reveals and responds in contemporary ways, to the loving reality that is the Mystery of the Divine.

2/ Men and women attracted by this charism, alive in the work of the Brothers, have joined them in prayer, community and work as members of Edmund Rice communities.

3/ This spirituality and work of education, advocacy, justice and solidarity are expressed in the variety of communities and contexts that exist throughout Oceania.

4/ The Mystery of the Divine in the world today challenges Edmund Rice communities to integrate the consciousness of Jesus and the charism of Edmund with an ever expanding worldview.

5/ Christian Brothers Oceania Province and Edmund Rice Education Australia invite all members of their communities to participate in formation experiences that will support their participation in the mission we share.
Moved by the Spirit

Breathing life into all that we do

Formation opens us to being moved by the Spirit and invites us into a space which places God and God’s vision of a world made whole at the centre of our lives. This is not always a comfortable space and is often one that is at odds with the prevailing culture. The movement of the Spirit in our midst inspires imagination and invites us to live creatively with life’s questions in a spirit of openness and discovery (see Acts 2:1-13).

In recognising the gifts of the Spirit, formation in Edmund Rice communities:

1/ Gives authenticity to our purpose and strengthens us in mission as individuals and communities;

2/ Examines the movement of the Spirit in the many life, death and resurrection cycles that are part of the unfolding of history and Our Sacred Story;

3/ Provides space for silence, prayer, contemplation, mindfulness, ritual, sacrament and reflective practice;

4/ Gives people the opportunity to discern how their personal gifts give contemporary expression to Edmund’s charism;

5/ Engages our traditions in dialogue with science, the Universe story and the wisdom of the First Nation Peoples of Oceania.

Alive in Relationship

In solidarity with all life on Earth

Formation opens us to being alive in relationship and invites us into dialogue locally, nationally and internationally, crossing boundaries of race, culture and religion. We are called to form meaning from the diverse stories and realities in our communities and in the world. This invites a shift in our worldview, opening us to a deeper level of relationship with God and neighbour (see Luke 10:25-37).

In recognising the interconnectedness of all life, formation in Edmund Rice communities:

1/ Invites people to deepen their awareness of the Mystery of the Divine in all creation;

2/ Encourages people to engage in dialogue and listen to others with understanding and compassion;

3/ Affirms that personal and organisational relationships are grounded in the principles of the dignity of all life, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity;

4/ Builds a sense of community that is inclusive: respecting difference, diversity and culture;

5/ Invites people into a practice of communal prayer and ritual that nurtures their relationship with God and builds communal identity.
Called to Liberation

Agents of transformation in our world

Formation opens us to the call of liberation and invites us to seek the fullness of life for all creation (see John 10:10). It challenges us to speak with authority as a prophetic voice in the Church and in the world. Liberation requires us to be present to others in a way that respects their dignity, worldview, hopes and dreams and invites us to work collaboratively with communities to experience mutual transformation.

In recognising the daring discipleship call, formation in Edmund Rice communities:

1/ Applies the Gospel message and Catholic social teaching as a means of societal and cultural critique;

2/ Develops the capacity to advocate for a just and sustainable world, encouraging a simplification of lifestyle that places needs over wants;

3/ Provides opportunities for people to form relationships with those who are marginalised within our society;

4/ Creates an environment where people can speak safely, with authenticity and in hope of a world where all live well;

5/ Challenges us to take risks in moving beyond our safe and known realities into often unsettling futures.

Have courage, the good seed will grow up in the children’s heart later on. 

Edmund Rice
1/ Formation always acts to transform hearts and minds.

2/ Formation is a canonical responsibility and a mandated priority of both Edmund Rice Education Australia and Christian Brothers Oceania Province in building and sustaining a mission-based focus in each Edmund Rice community.

3/ Formation is essential to maintaining the authenticity and identity of Edmund Rice communities.

4/ All members of Edmund Rice communities should have access to formation opportunities at a level appropriate to their role, circumstance and needs.

5/ Formation is ongoing, dynamic and respectful of the diverse experience and spiritual journeys of communities and individuals.

6/ Formation is responsive to cultural contexts and respectful of the wisdom of the First Nation Peoples of Oceania.

7/ Formation is shaped by humanity’s emerging understanding of its place within the greater web of life on Earth.

8/ Edmund Rice communities share responsibility for strategic planning, development, design and facilitation of formation experiences, in partnership with Edmund Rice Education Australia and Christian Brothers Oceania formation personnel.

9/ Edmund Rice Education Australia and Christian Brothers Oceania Province acknowledge our many partners in formation in the Catholic Church, ecumenically, with religious traditions and with women and men of good will.

10/ Formation is most effective when it is conscious of the need to balance professional responsibilities, family life and involvement with the wider community.

Nothing else will change a person’s life except an experience of God. You may use all the other terms you want – but – at the heart of it – is a spirit that flows through our Universe that almost demands from us a response.

Brother Philip Pinto
1 “Earth is a precious living habitat, a fragile web of ecosystems and a community of kin.” Norman Habel, An Inconvenient Text (ATF Press, 2009) 43

2 When Jesus is asked, “What is the greatest commandment?” he replies, “love God with all your heart, soul and mind and love your neighbour as yourself” (See Mark 12:28-34; Matthew 22:34-40; and Luke 10:25-28. The roots of this response come from Deuteronomy 6:4 and Leviticus 19:18.)

3 If the whole Church takes up this missionary impulse, she has to go forth to everyone without exception. But to whom should she go first? When we read the Gospel we find a clear indication: not so much our friends and wealthy neighbours, but above all the poor and the sick, those who are usually despised and overlooked, “those who cannot repay you” (see Luke 14:14). (Pope Francis, 2013, Evangelii Gaudium, #48)

4 Congregation for Catholic Education, 2007, Educating Together In Catholic Schools, #45

5 Jesus’ faith in God was shaped by the covenant at Sinai, nourished by Jewish narratives about God’s saving deeds in history, and expressed by the prayers, rituals and practices of Judaism as well as by observance of Torah. (Edward Kessler in Cunningham et al. Eds., 2011, Christ Jesus and the Jewish People Today, Eerdmans: Michigan, p. 158)

6 We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbour has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Pope Paul VI taught that “if you want peace, work for justice.” The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict. (http://www.usccb.org)

7 Besides the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of “all of us”, made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society. (Benedict XVI, 2009, Caritas In Veritate, #7)

8 [The principle of subsidiarity directs that] a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good. (John Paul II, 1991, Centesimus Annus, #48)

The images featured within this document are from The Icon of Edmund Rice by Desmond Kyne.