



*Cast all your cares into the arms
of Divine Providence.*



FOUNDER OF THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS /
PRESENTATION BROTHERS

*"Each Brother is an open letter
from Christ, a message written
not with ink but in the Spirit of
the living God, with a faithful
human heart to carry it."*

Bl. Edmund Ignatius Rice

Feast Day: 5 May

Early Life

Edmund Ignatius Rice was born during Penal times in Callan, Co. Kilkenny. He first secretly attended a hedge school before moving to study in the commercial academy in Kilkenny. A bright young man, Edmund apprenticed to his uncle in Waterford City, in a business which supplied trade ships. He did well at his trade and had earned enough money for a comfortable life by the time he was in his early twenties.



Tragedy

Edmund married Mary Elliot in 1786 but tragedy struck when a pregnant Mary was seriously injured in an accident, dying shortly after giving birth to their daughter Mary, who was born with disabilities.

Devastation and a time of deep prayer led Edmund to reflect thoroughly on his life and his vocation which he felt now was to work not for himself or gaining wealth but for the dignity of the poverty-stricken, especially through providing education for them.

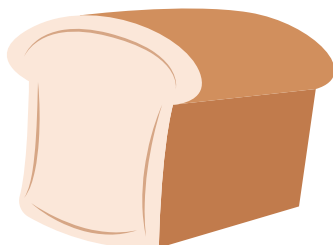
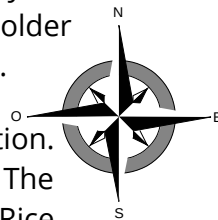
New Direction

At the age of 40, Edmund changed his life's mission. Although he was a wealthy business living a comfortable life, he could see the effects of poverty all around him, especially on the young boys in the city of Waterford. He decided to act and sold off his business interests to start a school for poor boys. He used a converted stable, and lived in the building too. Thomas Grosvenor and Patrick Finn soon joined him in living a life of community over the Stable School on New Street.



Edmund Rice's vision stretched far beyond one simple stable school and he wanted to found a Religious Congregation, who would have traditional vows and be recognised by Rome. In June 1802 he started building a monastery in Waterford City at Mount Sion using his private resources to fund it. It was a larger building, a school with living accommodation for the Brothers, sparsely furnished. The school was built to accommodate about one hundred boys in each classroom. The Brother teaching the class was assisted by the older boys, called 'monitors', who examined the homework and the catechism.

The boys learned to read and write, as well as studying arithmetic and religious education. The older students worked on book-keeping, and studied geography and navigation. The boys also were prepared for their first Holy Communion and Confirmation. Edmund Rice championed education beyond the classrooms walls as the boys could bring home school library books to read to their parents who were largely illiterate.



The children in the school were poor and hungry and received freshly baked bread at a bakery built by Edmund at the school each morning at school which gave them the energy they needed to apply themselves at school. The boys were also poorly dressed so he employed tailors to make suits for the boys at a tailor's shop.

BL. EDMUND IGNATIUS RICE



Edmund and his brother companions worked and prayed together, living a semi-monastic life alongside the hard work of teaching unruly boys under the most basic of conditions. The Presentation Sisters founded by Nano Nagle in Cork City had already opened a school in Waterford city and were educating the girls. In 1808, following the example of the Presentation Sisters, Edmund and his companions took vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, and devoted themselves to the education of poor boys. They were known as the Society of the Presentation. In the early days, when Edmund first began to attract followers to his way of life, they formed themselves into little groups of laymen.

Community Life

Penal Laws

Since Ireland was still under the Penal Laws, all of Edmund Rice's endeavours to educate the boys were considered illegal at the time. However Edmund knew that the boys needed an education in order to rise about their poverty.

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



Edmund received much of his strength, courage and confidence from his strong devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and frequent reception of Holy Communion. He encourage the Brothers to attend Mass daily and always encouraged the boys to visit the Church daily to pray.

Faith

Death / Legacy

Edmund died on Thursday, 29th August 1844 following a number of years of ill-health. He was buried at Mount Sion in the heart of Waterford city and was mourned greatly by people in Waterford City who knew just how much of a champion this humble man had been for them in their poverty and difficulty.

On 6th October 1996, Pope John Paul II beatified Edmund Rice, the founder of the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers. He was declared 'Blessed'



TIME TO REFLECT:

- IF YOU COULD MEET EDMUND RICE, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HIM?
- WHY DO YOU THINK EDMUND FOUND SUCH STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT?
- WHAT INSPIRES YOU THE MOST ABOUT EDMUND RICE'S LIFE?

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES



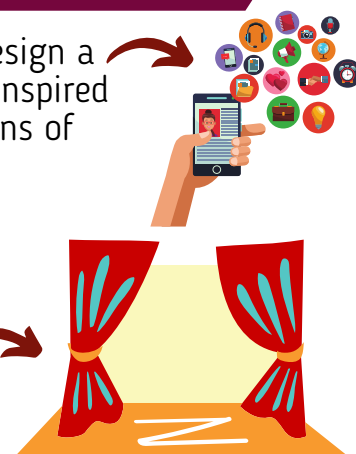
- Watch this YouTube video on the life and legacy of Edmund Rice.

- Create a display / design a social media post / inspired by the life and actions of Edmund Rice.



- Research Venerable Nano Nagle and compare and contrast their lives.

- Choose an episode from Edmund Rice's life and dramatise it / mime in a small group.

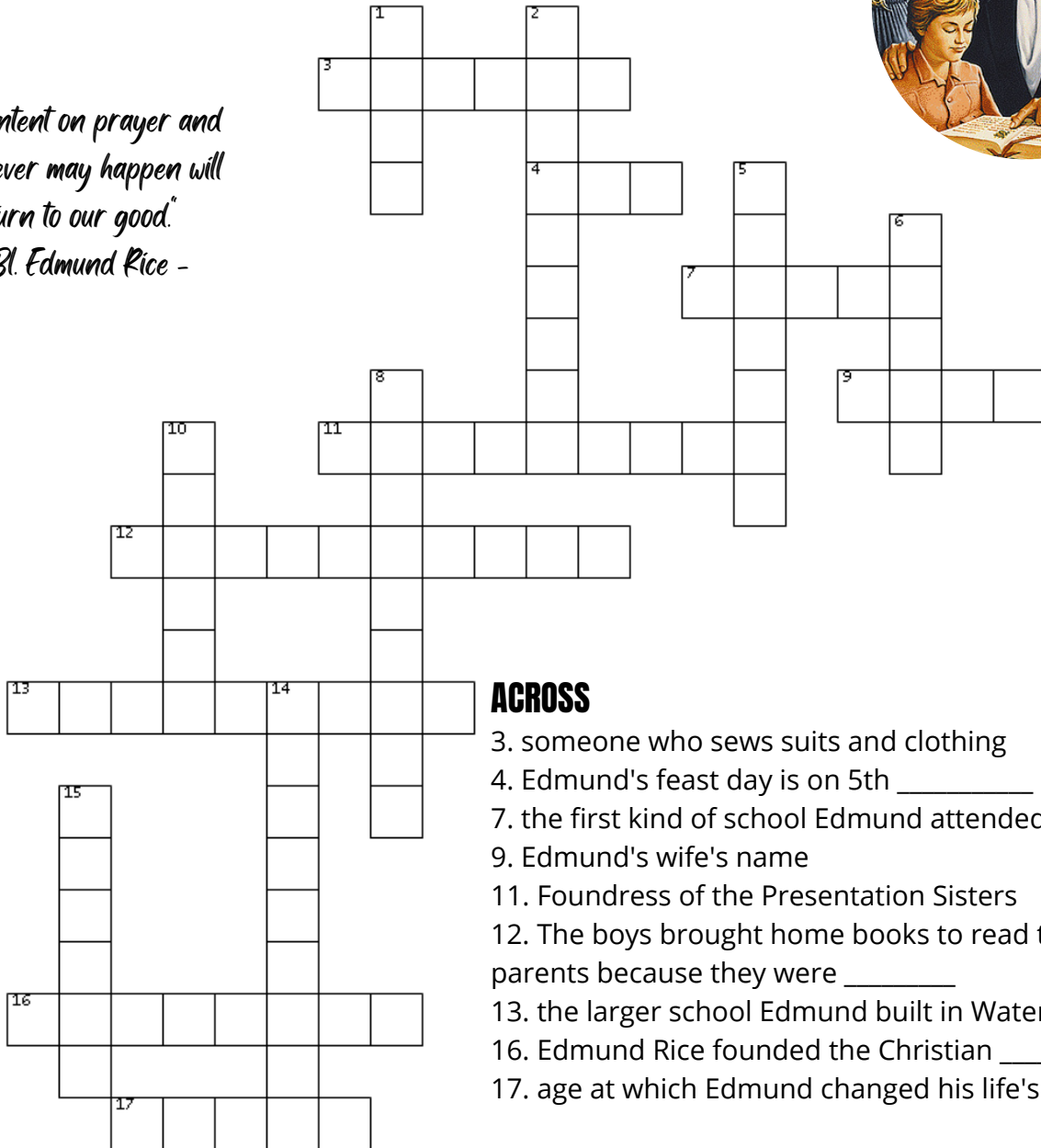




Bl. Edmund Ignatius Rice



"Be intent on prayer and whatever may happen will turn to our good."
-Bl. Edmund Rice -



ACROSS

- 3. someone who sews suits and clothing
- 4. Edmund's feast day is on 5th _____
- 7. the first kind of school Edmund attended
- 9. Edmund's wife's name
- 11. Foundress of the Presentation Sisters
- 12. The boys brought home books to read to their parents because they were _____
- 13. the larger school Edmund built in Waterford
- 16. Edmund Rice founded the Christian _____
- 17. age at which Edmund changed his life's mission

DOWN

- 1. Edmund's daughter's name
- 2. Edmund received frequent Holy _____
- 5. Edmund was declared _____ in 1996
- 6. the Laws that Catholics in Ireland were suffering under at the time
- 8. City where Edmund lived
- 10. Birthplace of Edmund Rice
- 14. Edmund had great devotion to the Blessed _____
- 15. Edmund built this at his school so the boys would have fresh bread

