



# *Shaping Our Future*

## *Christian Brothers Oceania*

*Australia - New Zealand - Papua New Guinea*

### *Newsletter No 18 February 2007*

**Faithful to the call of Jesus  
and inspired by Edmund Rice,  
we Christian Brothers of Oceania  
walk with those at the margins of their community, particularly young people,  
and,  
through education,  
proclaim liberation and justice for all.  
(Mission Focus Statement for Oceania)**

Dear Brothers and all members of the Edmund Rice Network,

We hope that this special year in the life of the Christian Brothers and the wider Edmund Rice Network has begun well for you all.

This letter comes to you from the Shaping Our Future Committee Oceania soon after the latest meeting which was held in Perth from March 13 – 16, 2007. It was the **second last meeting of the SOFCO Committee**. The last meeting will be held in Hanmer Springs just outside Christchurch in New Zealand. That meeting will occur from April 30 – May 3, 2007.

#### **Organisational Structure for Oceania Province**

This letter is not high on details concerning the organisational structure for the Oceania Model. The Committee considered proposals in relation to this matter at its meeting and these will be further refined and will be presented to the Inter-Province Leadership Committee in the middle of March. Subsequent to that meeting, and by late March or early April, you will receive information which will give a more detailed outline of the organisational structure which will allow the 'Model for the Future' of the Oceania Province to become **operational by October 1, 2007**. The communication will also provide information on the evolutionary way in which the organisational structure and the positions within it will be filled.

#### **Implementation Group**

As the Shaping Our Future Committee Oceania moves into retirement an Implementation Group will take over and ensure that **all that needs to be in place** to have the Oceania Province functioning on October 1 is in fact

there. This will be done within the spirit of the Model for the Future already approved in late 2006 and the organisational structure and the implementation process which will be communicated to you by early 2007.

## **Clusters for Communities of Brothers and Cluster Leaders**

Each of the Provinces and Regions across Oceania has already or is now exploring the matter of how the communities of Oceania will be grouped together in clusters. The **final decisions** on this will be announced by the middle of April. At about the same time there will also be an announcement of the process which will be used to surface the names of the Brothers who will be leaders of the clusters around Oceania.

The Brothers who take up the challenge of being a cluster leader will be carrying out a critical role for the Congregation in Oceania. The **Cluster Leaders** will need to have the ability to call the Brothers of the Cluster together so that they can make important decisions about the future of the Cluster, to network with other members of the Edmund Rice Network (ERN), and to collaborate with the staff of the Life and Mission Teams which deal with Ministries, Formation, Administrative and Support Services and the Development of the ERN.

## **Province Celebrations**

Over the coming months each of the Provinces and Regions is holding **gatherings of reflection and celebration** to bring the current organisational structure to a conclusion and to prepare for the future. Some of these involve the Brothers only and some will have wider involvement. The basic details for each of these is listed here:

- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March: St Patrick's Province: Dinner for people & ministries of the Province - including visit by Brs George Massay and Charles Majaliwe from East Africa.
- Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May: St Francis Xavier Province: Special Founder's celebrations.
- Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May: St Patrick's Province: Celebration for staff of Treacy Centre.
- Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June – Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June: Edmund Rice Region: Region Gathering at Kefamo.
- Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July – Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July: St Joseph's Province Gathering.
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July: St Francis Xavier Province Gathering.
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July – Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July: St Patrick's Province Brothers' Assembly at Edmund Rice Centre, Amberley.
- Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July: Holy Spirit Province Retreat & Chapter Processing.
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July: St Mary's Province Gathering.
- Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August: Holy Spirit Province Public Celebration – WA.
- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September: Holy Spirit Province Public Celebration – SA.
- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September: St Francis Xavier Province Centre celebrations.
- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September: St Mary's Province Dinner (possibly).

## **Gathering of Brothers in Perth**

On one evening during the meeting in Perth the Brothers in Perth were invited to a barbecue and conversation with the members of the Shaping Our Future Committee Oceania. It proved to be a very relaxing and enjoyable evening. Some of the issues which surfaced in the course of the

**conversation** including expressions of concern that future cluster leaders receive appropriate support as they carry out their role, that the future structures new energy and resources end up in better and deeper expressions of our mission and ministries and that 'we keep moving forward' despite what fears or anxieties may surface.

## **Discernment of Oceania Leadership Team**

While it is not the responsibility of the Shaping Our Future Committee Oceania we take this opportunity to remind you twenty Brothers are gathering (or gathered) in Melbourne from February 20 – 25 for a **significant period of discernment** in order to surface the names for the inaugural Oceania Leadership Team. These names will be sent to the Congregation Leader and it is hoped that he will complete the appointment process by early April.

## **Closing Reflections**

We are on schedule to **inaugurate the new Province** on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, alongside the establishment of Edmund Rice Education Australia which will take over the governance of the schools which are governed by the Christian Brothers in Australia.

We believe that the **changes in structures** are being accompanied by a deep and prayer-filled openness to the Spirit in the Brothers and the other members of the Edmund Rice Network. The changes are about releasing and better channelling the enormous energy which is in the Edmund Rice Charismatic movement which is sweeping across Oceania.

This energy will be expressed in **new ways in ministries** which already exist and in new ministries which respond to changing needs in our society and in 'the ecological state of the world'. This energy will be nurtured in small and large groups which come together to spend time in prayerful silence and conversation about the Gospel and the expression of the Edmund Rice gift in the Church community and in the world. These gatherings will take place within the Oceania Province and across the Province and Edmund Rice Education Australia. A change in structures does not mean a loss of relationships – let us nurture these relationships in this time of transition.

May the God who loved us all into existence,  
the Son who showed us a new way of being human  
and the Spirit who gives us love and wisdom guide us all over these coming months.

Brothers Kevin Ryan (Chair), Vince Duggan, Peter Dowling, Luke Quinn, Joe Lauren, Laurie Needham  
Shaping Our Future Committee Oceania