

Walk with Us (Luke 24:15)
"Stay with Us" and eat (Luke 24:29-30)
Sharing the Good News with "Hearts Burning" (Luke 24:32-33)



BLESSED EDMUND RICE

1762-1810

Edmund Rice lived out the Gospel values of Hospitality, Love, Service, Humility and Forgiveness.

Hospitality

Born in Callan, Ireland, in 1762, Edmund came to the bustling city port of Waterford as a young man.

Following the tragic death of his wife, he became more aware of the disadvantaged people around him and in 1802, he set up a free school for boys living in poverty. Edmund was given the grace to respond to the call of Jesus by identifying with Christ in the poor.

His example evoked a deep awareness of God's loving presence in all. He invited his followers to share the Gospel insight to reach out to the needy.

Love and Service

In 1791, Edmund bought a bible and it is not an exaggeration to say that this purchase literally changed his life. It is equally true that the Word of God sustained him all through life.

He drew up a list of passages from the bible that had a special application to his life as a merchant and he recorded them on the fly leaf of the sacred book. The texts he noted on the front reveal how the care of the poor, especially in bringing them some justice in their wretched state, was uppermost in his mind.

One of them in particular seems to point to his job as a Christian merchant: **"Lend without any hope of return." (Luke 6:35)**. This quotation also must have had some implications on his final decision to sell his thriving firm in order to give his life to educating the poor.

Since 1802, when the first school began in Waterford, Ireland, Edmund Rice education has grown in over 20 countries.

Humility and Forgiveness

Edmund wrote in a letter: **"Have courage, the good seed will grow up in the children's hearts later on."**

Slowly he and his companions (The Christian Brothers) were experiencing the truth of this belief. There was no doubt about Edmund's vision for his schools, and their success was widely acclaimed.

In spite of the full schedule of teaching each Brother had assigned to him, several hours of the day were set aside for prayer and meditation. This was an essential part of their lives. Self-denial practices were carried out and meals were quite simple, perhaps too simple, since the men put in long hours in difficult school work every day but they were committed to live much like the poor families that they served.

Prayer (Feast Day 5th May)

Dear God we thank you for the life of Blessed Edmund Rice. He opened his heart to Christ present in those oppressed by poverty and injustice. May we follow his example of faith and generosity. Grant us the courage and compassion of Blessed Edmund as we seek to live lives of love and service. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.