



# Presentation Day 2022

A Short Guide for PBST Schools



*All are welcome;  
All are included.  
All are enriched;*



project

leadership education  
and formation project

*'Leading with Faith in the Future'*



# Presentation Day

## A Short Guide

(You are welcome to adapt material from this short guide for use on school websites, social media, school announcements, staff and parent emails, newsletters etc.

Use in whatever ways help you to promote the feast and educate about its meaning).



## When is Presentation Day?

It is the feast of the Presentation of Our Lady and it takes place on 21st November.

## What is meaning of the Feast of the Presentation?

Officially, the feast is called the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple.

It celebrates the fact that Mary, as a young Jewish girl was 'presented' in the Temple of Jerusalem, the holiest site in Judaism. It signifies Mary offering her life to God.

So, Mary, presents her life to God. Later as a young Jewish woman, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus, the Saviour. Mary, so to speak, presents Jesus to the world and to us.

In a sense, this is the call of every Christian: to offer our gifts and talents to God, in the service of our fellow men and women. Like Mary, we present our lives to God and by our witness to the Gospel, we present Jesus to the world.

## Why is the Feast important to us?

We are a school in the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust (P.B.S.T.). We are a Catholic School in the Presentation tradition of Edmund Rice education. We are part of the worldwide Presentation Family. Celebrating 'Presentation Day' marks our identity as a Catholic school/ a gospel community in this tradition. It is a feast which encourages us to reflect our commitment to be caring school communities where all members of those communities are valued and loved.





## Does anyone else celebrate this Feast, outside of schools/groups in the Presentation Brothers tradition?

Yes indeed! The Feast of the Presentation is celebrated by the Presentation Sisters and the Nano Nagle Family throughout the world. The early Brothers followed the Rule of the Presentation Sisters (adapted for men). Later, when the majority of Edmund Rice's Brothers adopted a new rule, along the lines of the French De La Salle Rule, Br. Michael Augustine Riordan continued to follow the Presentation Rule in the South Monastery in Cork. He was joined by others and, therefore, there continued within the Edmund Rice tradition, a group of Brothers who would follow the Presentation Rule – Presentation Brothers. Increasingly today, the feast of the Presentation is also celebrated in the Christian Brothers/Edmund Rice Network throughout the world as part of the common heritage of the Nagle-Rice Family.

## How can we include staff/students of other faiths and of no religious faith in our celebration of Presentation Day?

Catholic Schools increasingly function in secular societies. It is important to acknowledge the presence of many people in our communities of other faiths and of no religious faith. All should be included and invited to be part of our celebration of Presentation Day to the extent that they wish. People of other faiths and of no faith will appreciate and respect an explanation of this feast and what it means to Catholics and Christians. They, too, bring their own gifts to our school communities and enrich our tradition. All can unite around celebrating the themes of 'gift giving', 'gift receiving', caring and commitment to service.

## Is this feast celebrated in the Church?

The Feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple is not a major Marian feast in the western Church. However, it is a major feast in the Eastern Orthodox tradition. It is celebrated by Greek orthodox and Russian orthodox Christians and features significantly in orthodox icons.





# How can we celebrate this feast meaningfully with people today, especially young people?

We can adapt the celebration to the age level and understanding of the group with whom you are dealing.

The Feast of the Presentation is, at its heart, about offering a gift. One of the greatest gifts we can offer someone is the gift of our caring, our kindness and our time and attention. The gift of Caring is the chosen theme for 2022-23 in all PBST schools.

Here is one possible introduction:

*This week, we will be celebrating the Feast of the Presentation in our school. Presentation Day is on November 21. When you tell people you go to a Presentation school, they may wonder what that means. Normally, when we use the word 'presentation', it means that somebody is receiving a special gift!! And this is exactly what the feast of the Presentation of Mary means. Mary, as a young woman said 'yes' to God's plan; she made a gift of her life to God; she presented her life to God. Later, as the mother of Jesus, she presented Jesus to the world, to us! So, this is what 'presentation' means. Each of us, who is a Christian, is called to say 'yes' to God and to present Jesus to the world of our time, to put into practice Jesus' message of love in our families, our schools and our life today.*

*Many of you who are in first year may have received the Sacrament of Confirmation last year. Those in sixth class in primary school may be preparing to receive Confirmation. You will receive God's Holy Spirit and you will be asked to be witnesses to Jesus and his message. So, this feast of the Presentation of Mary which we are celebrating is very relevant to your lives as young Christians. Like Mary, you are asked to present Jesus to the world. And it comes down to how we live, how we show that we care, how we help those in need, how we co-operate with our parents and teachers and friends.*

Schools will find many creative ways to highlight the themes of 'gift giving' and 'gift receiving' through acts of caring and kindness.



## You Tube Clips – Another Route into this Theme



### 1. Brother Kevin's lifetime gift of caring for the homeless

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fgs4QUhkiXQ>

The first clip focuses on a life of giving selflessly to the homeless of Dublin. Earlier this year, Brother Kevin, a Capuchin Brother, retired having spent more than fifty years serving one of Dublin's most marginalised communities. When Pope Francis visited Dublin in 2017, he made a private visit to the Capuchin Day Care Centre.

This clip offers the possibility to explore the theme of caring in a very contemporary way.

How does Presentation Day/the Feast of the Presentation challenge us to be kind and caring people?

What will we do in our school / class / group to celebrate the Feast that might demonstrate that we care about others?



### 2. Fresh Eyes – Andy Grammar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bgemCaaQkU>

The second clip also focuses on the homeless. Andy Grammar is an American singer who has used his celebrity status to improve society. He had a huge international hit a few years ago with Don't Give up on Me which featured in the film Five Feet Apart. Much of Andy's social activism has focused on the invisibility of marginalised people in American society. In the richest and most powerful country in the world, whole communities go ignored and effectively become invisible to the rest of society. In this video, a simple act of caring is shown to have a huge impact on people's sense of self-worth and happiness.

Are there 'invisible' people in your community, in your school, in your classroom? As we celebrate Presentation Day, what might you do to reach out to people who go unnoticed?

Might these invisible people have talents and gifts that you have simply never taken to the time to appreciate?



## You Tube Clips – Another Route into this Theme



### 3. The gift of citizenship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vx0NMzpRX4s>

This final clip demonstrates how we, as a wealthy nation, can offer the gift of citizenship to people who have escaped poverty, prejudice and persecution in their own countries. The offering of this gift can become a moment of celebration for both the giver and the receiver.

Less than fifty years ago, Irish people were economic migrants who travelled to Britain, the United States, Australia and many other countries. There are far more people of Irish heritage living outside Ireland than live within it. We are now one of the world's wealthiest counties.

What has Ireland's historical experience of poverty and exploitation taught us? Have we been as generous in welcoming migrants to our country as we might have been?

How do you view migrants?

If you or your family are yourselves recent arrivals in Ireland, how have you been treated?

## Linking with the Presentation Brothers

Celebrating Presentation Day offers an opportunity for school communities/groups to link with the Presentation Brothers. Visits, guest speakers, projects – there are many opportunities to build events around the feast, which have a particular focus on the work of the Presentation Brothers today.

**For further information see:**



leadership education  
and formation project



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# Prayers for Presentation Day

As we celebrate Presentation Day – the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, we now place our prayers and intentions before God at this special time:



1. We pray for Pope Francis and all those called to leadership in the Church. May they continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring hope and encouragement to people today.  
*Lord, hear us...*
2. We pray for those who suffer warfare and violence – in Ukraine, Yemen, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world. We remember refugees, migrants and those who are homeless. We ask the Lord to bless all those individuals and organisations who are working to bring healing and hope to the suffering.  
*Lord, hear us...*
3. We remember the bereaved, the lonely, the sick and the elderly. Lord, help each of us to be conscious of what we can do to reach out to those in need with a smile, a word of encouragement, a phone call and a helping hand.  
*Lord, hear us...*
4. Lord, help us to respect the dignity of each person and value the precious gift of each human life. Let us pray especially for young people that they may experience the love of God and learn to live generous lives.  
*Lord, hear us...*
5. During this month of November, we remember our deceased loved ones and friends. We remember especially deceased members of our own school community...  
*Lord, hear us.*
6. As the world struggles to deal with the climate emergency, we pray for world leaders in the aftermath of Cop 27 in Egypt. May all of us be inspired by Pope Francis call in Laudato Si, to care for the Earth, our common home  
*Lord, hear us...*

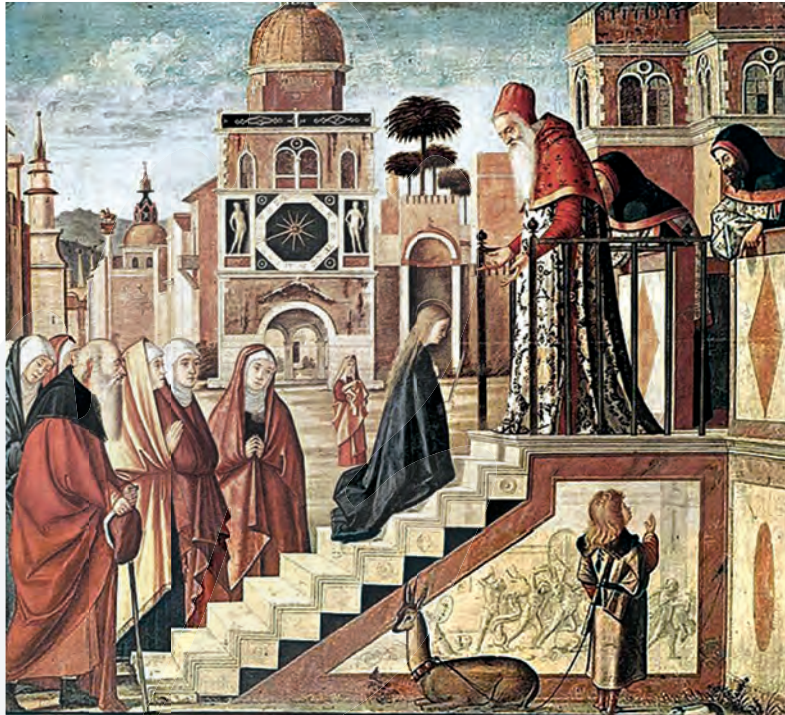


7. We pray for all effected by the cost of living crisis and for those who find it almost impossible to find a home. May political leaders and civil society respond to this crisis with new creativity and generosity.  
*Lord, hear us...*
8. We pray for our school community, students, staff, parents, and past pupils. May God bless all of us as today, as we strive to be a Presentation Family, truly at the service of each other and caring for those most in need.  
*Lord, hear us...*
9. We pray for the gift of caring. As we grow in Christ's love, may we be inspired by the life of Jesus to live a life of kindness, generosity and selflessness.  
*Lord, hear us.*
10. We pray for vocations to the Priesthood, the Religious Life. We pray for vocations to the Presentation Brothers. Let us place all these prayers, along with the silent prayers of our hearts before Mary as we pray:  
*'Sé do bheatha Mhuire.../ Hail Mary...*



# The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – November 21st, 2022

Homily - Denis McBride C.Ss.R.



Presentation of Mary at the Temple - Vittore Carpaccio (c.1500-10)

vittorio carpaccio

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is not recounted in any of the four Gospels, but it is in The Protoevangelium of James, also known as the Infancy Gospel of James. This is an apocryphal Gospel written towards the end of the second century. In the first section of the text, we are introduced to Joachim and Anna, the parents of Mary. As yet they have no

child. One day, an angel stands before Anna and calls her by name. The angel tells her that the Lord has heard her prayer and that soon she will conceive and that the whole world will know about her child.

Anna promises to give the child as a gift to the Lord, whether it is male or female. Her child will minister to the Lord all the days of its life. What faith cannot answer, a sympathetic imagination is ready to supply, which has made this writing very popular for painting and icons, particularly in the Orthodox traditions.

You can see the story in the imaginative painting by Vittore Carpaccio. Born in Venice Carpaccio sets the story in the luscious background of a Venetian piazza. You see Mary, leaving her parents and relatives behind her, as she kneels on one of the steps that rise to the Temple entrance. She faces away from her family towards her new home. At the bottom of the steps, you can see Joachim and Anna with the other members of the family watch as Mary leaves them behind to enter the Temple. She kneels before the high priest who has come to welcome her. All her family have to let her go. In the bottom right-hand corner, a small boy holds his pet doe, a symbol of innocence, but is distracted and misses this great moment.

The feast followed the dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary, built in 543 by the Byzantines. The Eastern Church took the feast to its heart, but it does appear in the West in the 11th century. In the 16th century, it became a feast of the universal Church, celebrated on 21st November. Even though the feast has no basis in history, it stresses an important truth about Mary: that from the beginning of her life, she was wholly dedicated to God.

Of course, later on, Mary will become a greater temple than any constructed by hands. Let us now look at the great painting by Caravaggio, Have a good look. It is beautiful, isn't it? In this painting





Madonna di Loreto - Amerighi da Caravaggio (c.1604-6)

*di Caravaggio*

we see Mary presenting Jesus to the little people, these two pilgrims, staff in hand, who have journeyed long and far in the hope of meeting the child Jesus. They are not celebrities, magi or kings from the east, just ordinary folk. And their destination is not a temple, not a palace, not a shrine. Their destination is a person, the person of Jesus.

Although like Mary Jesus was presented in the Temple, more importantly it is Mary who presents Jesus to those who seek him out. Mary is not clutching the child possessively to herself, saying through her body language:

"He is mine, only mine."

No, she presents Jesus to those who seek him. She holds the child for others to see, for others to reach, for others to touch. Jesus is her own but not her own. He belongs to all who hunger for his presence.

Mary's vocation is not only to hold Jesus but also to let him go; let him become the person he must become; let him love the people he chooses to love and the friends he elects to call; let him choose the roads he must walk; let him follow the mysterious inner voice that speaks to him alone. All mothers must

***... she presents Jesus to those who seek him ...***

learn the painful act of letting go. Mothers must not only nurture the presence of the child within them; they must nurture the leaving of the child in time and let go.

Today we celebrate the Presentation of Mary; this feast challenges all of us to present Mary and Jesus not in a Temple building but in the hearts and minds of all of who live in a wounded world. We not only hold Mary and Jesus in our hearts, but because we love them, we share them. The people we love we should never keep possessively to ourselves.

Those we love should be presented to a wider world. That is today's lovely feast.

## Final Reflection.

Just like Mary, all parents face the challenge of letting go of their child.

### A Mom Letting Go

I held you tightly in my heart before I knew your name.  
I wondered what you'd be like and if we would be the same.  
I held you in my stomach as I lay in bed at night.  
I felt for every kick and move and smiled in sheer delight!  
I held you as you cooed and cried before you learned to crawl.  
I held you when you had a bump or took a nasty fall.  
I held you as we rocked at night and sang our many songs.  
I held you as you walked to me the first time 3 steps long!  
I held you as I prayed for you when you were feeling low.  
I held you when you were mad at me because I had said no.  
I held you when you let me – as you were growing tall.  
I held you less with my arms back then than I had when you were small.  
But I always held you in my heart, and on my lips in prayer.  
That no matter where you moved or lived, I had you covered there.  
When adult friends hurt your feelings I'd want to hold you then  
I never saw you grown up – or just as another friend.  
But you were always my little child – someone for me to guide  
Someone to protect from this vicious world – within my arms to hide.  
But something happened the other day that felt like quite a blow  
The Lord told me my job was done and that I could let go.  
That I could still pray daily for all your heart to soar  
And I could love you from afar and each day love you more.  
But the holding on just has to stop – you have your own life (this I know).  
And so with love I write this to you – to tell you I'm letting go.

Linda SK Smith







Madonna of Bruges, by Michelangelo

## We Share a Dream and Sing with One Voice.

Presentation Day Homily by Br. Martin

*The Madonna and Child are  
God's supreme truth.*

Michelangelo

*Behold your mother.*

Jn. 19:27

Our mothers are so important in all our lives. They give us life. They love us so much and they continue to nurture us throughout our lives.

One practical thing, we could do today is to go home and thank our own mothers, in some special way, through some act of kindness for all their love and for all they have done for us. For anyone who has lost their mother, that is a great pain. Remember that in this month of November, we pray for the dead – those who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith. We believe that they are still very close to us, still loving us.

Jesus gives us Mary as our spiritual mother. Mary has always been central in Irish Catholic spirituality. In days of persecution of the Penal Laws, when Catholics did not have easy access to Mass, they always prayed the Rosary and even today, the 'Hail Mary' is a favourite prayer of so many people.

We celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of Mary, because the founding congregations of almost all of PBST schools were the Presentation Sisters and the Presentation Brothers. We are part of the Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice stories. We are part of the Presentation Family.

When I was head of the Presentation Brothers, part of my role was to visit regularly schools, missions and projects in Africa.

It's impossible not to be struck, on such visits, by the huge differences between life here in Ireland and life in the countries of the developing world.

- United Nations figures show that 22,000 children die each day due to poverty. And they die, of preventable diseases, in some of the poorest villages on earth, usually far removed from the attention of media or the world.
- Over 100 million children have no school to go to, no access to even the most basic school.
- Huge numbers of teenagers and young people, like yourselves, will walk for miles each day, just to fetch clean water. It is good to remember this the next time you turn on the tap at home.
- Over one billion people today cannot read a book or even sign their name.
- And, as we know, our entire planet faces a climate emergency and this is an issue on which young people are making their voices heard and can make a real difference.

I place these facts before you for two reasons:

1. **Firstly**, to encourage each of us to be grateful for what we have, to be grateful to our parents, our grandparents, our teachers, and especially those in the past who made sacrifices to build up our country and our educational system. Today, on Presentation Day, many of us will gather to celebrate Mass. Another word for Mass is the Eucharist. The word Eucharist means 'Thanksgiving'.

So, at this Mass, we give thanks to God for our lives, our families, our health, our friends.

2. **Secondly**, I place these facts about the developing world before you, because I want to encourage you, as young people, to use your gifts and talents in the service of others, especially in the service of those in need, whether here in our own city or far away, in the service of climate justice.

Whenever we gather for Mass, we pray the 'Our Father'. If God is our father, then each of us is a sister and brother in Christ.

This is the challenge of faith. To look at each other not as strangers, but as sisters and brothers, as people we should care about. Never underestimate the power of a single act of human kindness to change the world.

So, today we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of Mary. When we hear the word 'Presentation', we think of a gift! Mary, as a young woman presented her own life to God and through her 'Yes' to God's call, presented Jesus to the world.

We give thanks for our Presentation Family. And I know the Presentation spirit is still alive, strong and growing in all of our PBST schools.





For me, being a Presentation Brother has been a wonderful life and a wonderful vocation. For those of you considering future careers, I encourage you to look seriously at the message of Jesus and to consider how God might be calling you! Do not be afraid, have courage! A world of suffering, pain and division needs a new generation of people on fire with the love of Christ, committed to service.

I encourage each one of you to remember that you are loved unconditionally by God as you are. The challenge then is to accept your own gifts and talents and present your life as a gift to others.

Use your gifts and talents well and remember those who are not so fortunate. And as we journey through life, let Jesus Christ be your model and hope.

One of our primary schools, Bunscoil Chríost Rí, has an anthem with these beautiful words, which equally apply to all of our schools:

*We are one but we are many  
And from all the lands on earth we come  
We share a dream and sing with one voice,  
I am, We are, We are Presentation.*

May God bless each one of you in your dreams and hopes, your families and your future. May faith in Christ always be strong in our lives and in our schools.

So, in the spirit of the feast of the Presentation of May, remember today to treasure and to thank your own mother.

And, as we live our lives in family and in school, remember the power of even a single act of human kindness. You can make a difference!

Amen.

# Edmund Rice Colouring Sheet



For Edmund, education was the key to freedom for poor children who had been raised in poverty. He wanted to raise their dignity and to give them a feeling of being cared for and that they were important. Edmund is reported to have welcomed each student by name in the morning of the start of class. This panel from the Edmund Rice icon reminds us that there is a strong religious aspect to the education offered by the Edmund.

**Teachers' note:** For a full set of colouring sheets (suitable for younger primary pupils) based on the life of Blessed Edmund, go to the Resources section of the PBST website: [www. http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/](http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/)



## Local reaction to the news that Edmund has opened a school for the poor



- What kind of place do you think Waterford was in 1802?
- How is it different from where you live today?
- What did people think of Edmund's idea to open a school for poor boys?
- Why do you think Edmund went ahead in opening a school if so many people were against it?

**Teachers' note:** *The entire Edmund Rice story is available in story book format (suitable for primary pupils) in the Resources section of the PBST website: [www. http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/](http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/)*



# From Wealthy Merchant to Quiet Revolutionary

## Edmund gives up his wealth to found a new Society.

*« The half-hour's explanation of the Catechism I hold to be the most salutary part of the system. It's the most laborious to the teachers; however, if it was ten times what it is I must own we are amply paid in seeing such a reformation in the children »*

*Edmund Rice*

## THE QUIET REVOLUTIONARY

AT LAST EDMUND sat and surveyed his little community. The two of them had arrived only this morning and already they had settled in to the life in the room above the stable. They seemed to have had a good session with the boys and that was the test. Poor boys! They are tough, and wild, and starving: we must feed them!

The despair of the last few days! If only friends would try to understand: but how could they since they did not understand his vision - the urge to do something with his life for Christ?

It was hard when the two helpers left. « Not for all the money you have, » they said. It took more than money to face his boys but they had a right to their religion. Now he had to face the objections of the people of New Street who did not want the « hoards of ragged urchins » passing their doors each day.

But now he saw hope for the urchins and he would see that they would soon have a proper school, the best school, and he and his little band of helpers would work and pray and lead lives for the glory of God and for the boys.

Was he mad to start in a stable? How could he explain that it was part of his aim to live like the people with whom he worked and whom he loved? Deprived of the wealth and power he had gained in Waterford over the past twenty-five years he was setting out

« naked to follow a naked Christ. » He was starting a revolution: taking a radical step because he believed in the dignity of the person and the beauty of the human soul. On account of his love for the poor he acted and would continue to act because he realised that this was God's will.



## MOUNT SION

After some time in New Street Edmund set about the next part of his plan to set up a religious society. In June 1802 he commenced to build a monastery where he and his followers could live a full religious life.

Although Edmund had got encouragement at first he was now opposed by the Bishop Dr. Hussey who asked Edmund to sign over his property. The test of following the will of God is obedience to authority and Edmund stood this test as one would expect from a man of his courage. Without question he handed over the deeds to the Bishop with the request to be allowed to live in part of the building so that he could continue his work for his poor boys. The Bishop, seeing his humility and dedication, blessed his work and named the new monastery and school « Mount Sion ».

## GROWTH IN SORROW

Soon the new community began to grow and the Brothers lived hard lives and carried out a staggering work-load. The hours in school were long, and at night they instructed adults and young people. At weekends they prepared the children for the sacraments and at the same time they continued the charities to which Edmund had been attached for many years.

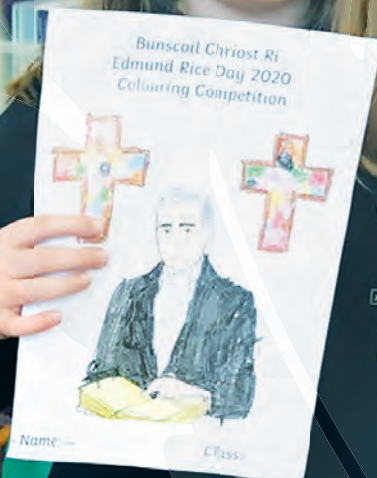
The worst cross Edmund had to bear was caused by misunderstanding. Some wrote condemning the work he was doing. Others wrote lies about him and his Society and he was also complained about to the Bishop and to the Pope.

In spite of all this Edmund applied for and got permission from the Bishop for his new rule adapted from the rule of the Presentation Sisters. On the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, Edmund and seven companions made annual vows in the presence of the Bishop, Dr. Power in 1808.

- What were the most significant challenges Edmund faced?
- What qualities did Edmund show during this difficult period?
- What challenges do people face today when helping the poor?
- How might you become a 'quiet revolutionary' in your own life?

**Teachers' note:** The entire Edmund Rice story is available in the above narrative format (suitable for Junior Cycle students) in the Resources section of the PBST website:  
[www. http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/](http://pbst.ie/catholic-school/)









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