

Bimonthly Diary No27 – March 14th 2009 -

REGISTERED NAME: Edmund Rice Brothers, The Philippines, Inc.

Our website: <http://www.peterthrupp.com/>

Quote of the Month:

“If you love what you are doing you will be successful”

Albert Schweitzer



HILONGOS NEWS

My two months stay in Australia:

Well firstly it's good to be back in Hilongos after what turned out to be an extended stay in Sydney. Enough to say the Doctors were not too keen for me to return but thank God I was cleared to travel in the first week of February. Suspicion of TB was the main obstacle though the procedure to fix the ingrown toenail did not help either. Anyway a quick visit to my two aging Aunties in Geelong then home to Leyte via Brisbane. I need to thank my cousins in Sydney who cared for me for the whole time I was with them.

Medical Mission 2009

Late February saw an influx of some 60 Doctors into Hilongos to serve the poor at no cost to themselves. 30 doctors from America joined the Alumni, present and past, of the Philippines University School of Medicine in Manila, to work as an effective team to solve as many medical cases as time allowed. They spent three days treating more than 2830 Patients, of which 130 were what I might call major surgeries. The money needed for this huge undertaking was raised partly by the local people and I can only marvel at their generosity, considering the poverty that exists here. The rest was donated by the Leyte Governor and local politicians. The Coordinator was Fr Lope Lesigues, who himself though living in America, was born here in Hilongos. The five resident Doctors of Hilongos, including our own Doctora Villaflor, were the catalysts which made this whole experience amazingly successful. As they say here - “Daghang Salamat Kaninyong Tanan” which translated means a big thank you to all who made this possible.

Visitors:

Frank Perkins made the 3 hour trip to the Tacloban airport, to meet Br Francis Hall from Rome. They arrived back in Hilongos safe but weary, some 12 hours later. Francis stayed with us for one week, his many reflection sessions were most rewarding and we certainly appreciated sharing time with him. We wish Francis God speed as he makes his way to Australia to spend the next two weeks with the OLT. We are now enjoying Tony Hempenstall's presence among us. This is Tony's second visit and as our cluster leader we were privileged to be able to share the week with him. We also will be visited by two members of the Oceania Team, Dean and Chris, before the end of the month.

The 2008 – 2009 Scholastic year ends

The month of March sees the time for wholesale tests and closures, as we say good bye to our graduating 4th years, and embrace a two months break from regular School. The new Scholastic year starts on June 1st. Of course, summer school runs for the whole two months, so our teachers do not get much of a break. We, the Brothers, hope to run a summer School of our own in the local Barangay. It is possible that from this will be born a more permanent plan to serve this much needy section of the Hilongos community.

E R Summer Classes:

The plan is simple enough in that I will engage two volunteer teachers, and spend four weeks trying to teach the children some basic skills. My overall aim is to encourage the children to enrol in their local School for the new Scholastic year. I will probably need to feed these children and may even have to assist in clothing them. The senior students Mercy College Mirrabooka, in Western Australia, have raised \$500 towards the project which will allow us to start the project immediately. Also small sums of money have come from friends and relations which has been gratefully accepted. Let's pray that this work will succeed and that Blessed Edmund will watch over us.

Visa business:

Frank will take his home break in April and Carl plans to travel in July. We have now acquired our ***two year missionary visas*** which will save us time and even a little money, so we thank Jessica and her team in Cebu for this wonderful news.

KABANKALAN NEWS

We are very excited to have Joe and Anne Stynes with us from Goulburn, NSW for the next 10 months. Tony Hempenstall, our Cluster Leader, has just spent the week with us and was very impressed with our new house and the Kabankalan scene. We thank Tony for his pastoral guidance and reflective sharing. Joe and Anne have been attending meetings and visiting schools to try to understand the situation with respect to English teaching and usage. It is a bonus that Joe has green thumbs. Our garden is taking shape. The disease is infectious. Rod claims success with beans which are thriving. Well, he did plant the seeds! John too has had success getting bougainvillea and hibiscus to strike. We are in the dry season so watering is necessary, but worth the effort. A container of 374 computers has just arrived from Australia and the work in getting these to where they are needed in the schools will use up all our spare time for the next couple of months. Thruppy will help sort them out in April but we will use paid local expertise as well. We will do our best to get as many of them into Schools as soon as possible. Those which have not travelled well may find a home in a junk yard, but not before we have exhausted all other possibilities. We take this opportunity to express our thanks to Andrew Dunnin for a huge effort. Thanks too to those who assisted him in any way. The breaking news is that Br Peter Hardiman may need to return to Perth to get more treatment, as his leg is not healing as quickly as the Doctors had hoped.

From Rod and all the Team.

Until next time Peter T