

History and Explanation of the House Crests

In August 2014, the first team of House student leaders and House Deans created the original House crests. The crests reveal each House's unique identity, and represent important aspects in the life of Blessed Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers. Members of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers founded O'Dea High School in 1923. These crests help keep the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice alive at O'Dea.



Edmund Rice founded some of the earliest Christian Brother Schools in County Dublin. By 1907, there were ten Christian Brother school communities throughout the county. Dublin's crest's cross is off centered like the shield of St. John. Blue represents the Virgin Mother and yellow represents Christ's triumph over death on the cross. Dublin's motto "Trean-Dilis" is Gaelic for "strength and faithfulness." The dragon represents strength; the Gaelic knot represents brotherhood; the cross represents our faith and religious identity; and the hand over heart represents diversity.



County Limerick was home to some of the earliest Christian Brother Schools, beginning in 1816. Limerick's crest boasts five main symbols. The River Shannon runs through the center. The flame on the crest stands for excellence. The Irish knot symbolizes the brotherhood, exemplified by Limerick's caring and supportive relationships. The Irish elk, a giant extinct deer, symbolizes both strength and courage. Limerick's final symbol is a multicolored shamrock representing O'Dea's four houses. Limerick's motto is "Strength in Unity."



County Kilkenny is known as the birthplace of Edmund Rice. He was born in Callan, County Kilkenny, in 1762. The center of Kilkenny's crest is the Christian Brother cross, representing O'Dea's identity as an Edmund Rice Christian Brother's school. The motto "F.I.R.E." stands for Fraternity (brotherly love), Integrity (firm principles), Respect (admiration and deference), and Excellence.



Edmund Rice's vocation began among the poor children of County Waterford in Ireland. Blessed Edmund died in Waterford in 1844. The Waterford crest is blue because of its name and location. Waterford is home to the Three Sisters of Ireland: River Barrow, River Nore, and River Suir. Similarly, O'Dea is surrounded by three bodies of water: Lake Union, Lake Washington, and the Puget Sound. The olive branch represents peace and wisdom. The diverse colors within the crest are stained glass, symbolizing connection to the Church. Waterford's motto is "Heart, Unity, Greatness".