



**CATHOLIC RECORD SOCIETY**

*British Catholic History*

Reg'd Charity no. 313529

*www.crs.org.uk*

**Annual Report 2023-2024**

**&**

**Notice of Annual General Meeting 2024**

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Dr Scholastica Jacob  
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Dr Carmen M. Mangion  
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## *From the Chair of Council*

This year the Catholic Record Society is 120 years old. It's quite something for us to consider this sustained endeavour in making available documents related to the history of Catholicism in 'the British Isles'. These documents, which have so often gone beyond the now considerably changed geopolitical borders of 1904, not only help to tell a story of a faith community but –in the case of Britain – cast light from the religious and social margins in challenge to mainstream narratives.

The most recent volume in the Record Series (number 90), *The Life and Letters of Lady Anne Percy, Countess of Northumberland (1536–1591)*, edited by Dr Jade Scott, was no exception to achieving this purpose. Lady Anne was a leading figure in the Northern Rebellion of 1569 and, as the book jacket notes, positioned herself "at the centre of a transnational Catholic network of support for Mary, Queen of Scots." Scott's volume sits within the long CRS tradition of seeking to make Catholic sources more widely available, a project now greatly enhanced by the digitisation and website availability that our forebears could not have imagined.

Looking back over the history of CRS from the vantage point of 2024, it is not difficult to identify the landmark developments. In 1951, not long after the end of the Second World War and just a few years shy of its fiftieth anniversary, the Society somewhat tentatively launched *Biographical Studies, 1534-1829: Materials Towards a Biographical Dictionary of Catholic History in the British Isles from the Breach with Rome to Catholic Emancipation* edited by A.F. Allison and D.M. Rogers and published by The Arundel Press in Bognor Regis. *Biographical Studies* was described as "carrying a stage further the labours of earlier scholars" by assembling their work "for general use". In other words, the Society moved into publishing interpretive historical scholarship in addition to the editing of archival materials. *Biographical Dictionary* was the forerunner of the Society's own imprint journal, *Recusant History: The Journal the Catholic Record Society, a Journal of Research in Post-Reformation Catholic History in the British Isles*, published from 1957. Another half century or so later, in 2014, *Recusant History* became *British Catholic History* when the Society made the decision to join forces with the academic journal publishing arm of Cambridge University Press. Today the scholarly articles in all these volumes reaching back to 1951 are available online via Cambridge Core and earlier this year the Society and CUP renewed their Agreement for the next five years of *British Catholic History* under the continuing editorship of Dr Katy Gibbons.

Another development pioneered by earlier generations was the Monograph Series. There have been eight volumes since J.A. Williams's *Catholic Recusancy in Wiltshire, 1660–1891*, published in 1968, which was soon followed by J.C.H. Aveling's much-used *Catholic Recusancy in the City of York, 1558-1971* (1970). As Dr Paul Arblaster, current Volumes editor notes in his report below, he has recently sent the ninth volume in this series to Boydell & Brewer; a collection of essays, edited by CRS members Dr Maria Power and Dr Jonathan Bush in which eleven authors explore eleven twentieth-century lay societies. It's a volume which promises to be of considerable interest to a wide readership.

Looking back over the decades it's clear how essential voluntary individual commitment has been to the taking of new initiatives but equally to 'keeping the show on the road'. Next year, Volume 10 in the Monograph Series will be dedicated to Michael Hodgetts for the significant part he played in doing just that, but this year I'd like to thank Dr Peter Doyle for his service to CRS and for his contributions as an historian. Peter is retiring from the Trustees of the Society having served as Custodial Trustee for many years. As Volumes Editor for a period he edited and published a number of volumes and in 2014 oversaw the digitisation of all the volumes going back to 1905. Peter's own first essay in *Recusant History*, a pioneering piece on the Catholic Social Guild, was published in 1993 and was followed at intervals by four essays on Catholicism in nineteenth-century Liverpool

and on the history of the episcopacy of England and Wales. His edition of the correspondence of Bishop Alexander Goss came out as Volume 85 in the Record Series in 2014.

Both Michael Hodgetts and Peter Doyle have been strong advocates of CRS as not simply a publishing organisation but also a community of those with an interest in Catholic history. Both worked to build community through the annual conference and through supporting the work of others in different ways. CRS Council has discussed ways that the Society can continue to work with new generations of historians, recognising the precarious nature of employment in academia, libraries and archives, and the heavy demands on schoolteachers. Grant-making, so capably administered by Professor Bill Sheils until his retirement from that role this year, is one practical and important way to give support and CRS is fortunate to have restricted funds for just this purpose; this year's conference breakfast meeting for early career scholars pioneered by Conference Secretary Dr Helen Kilburn is another. And we are actively thinking about other ways to build community and mutual research support. Several initiatives taken by Dr Carmen Mangion as Membership Secretary to recruit new members and reach out to younger historians are having an impact, as her report indicates.

In last year's Annual Report, I referred to two initiatives that were in hand: a statistical project, 'Catholicism in Numbers' and a digitising project to improve the searchability of the first seventy-four volumes of the Record Series on the CRS website. Both of these have now been completed as Dr Liam Temple reports in more detail below. Looking ahead, the Council will be planning further digitising projects and in September will begin discussions about how the Society might best make a contribution to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Catholic Emancipation. If you have ideas or suggestions, or would like to be involved, please do contact any of the Council members.

Finally, a significant piece of work this year has been revision to the CRS Constitution under the guidance and leadership of CRS Secretary, Dr Scholastica Jacob. This, too, is part and parcel of building on the past with an eye to the future. The resulting draft revised Constitution will be a major item on the agenda of this year's Annual General Meeting at the annual conference in Leeds. If you aren't able to join the Conference in Leeds in person, remember that it is possible to join online for part or whole of what promises to be another excellent gathering. We hope to see you in one way or another.

Dr Susan O'Brien

[chair@crs.org.uk](mailto:chair@crs.org.uk)

## *Annual Report 2023-2024*

### *1. Membership of Council*

Dr Carmen Mangion was re-elected to Council at the 2023 AGM. Dr Peter Nockles came to the end of his period of office in 2024.

### *2. Financial Report*

The Treasurer is pleased to report that the Society's finances remain sound as demonstrated by the figures set out below.

Accounts for the year ended March 31, 2024 have been drawn up by King Hope Chartered Accountants and independently examined.

#### **Information/comments on incomings/outgoings (with prior year comparatives):**

Information/comments on incomings/outgoings (with prior year comparatives):

- a. Income was made up as follows:

|                          | <b>2023</b>         | <b>2024</b>         |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Donations                | 1000                | 1000                |
| Subscriptions            | 8168                | 8764                |
| Investment income        | 19281               | 20174               |
| Conference income        | 3289                | 6928                |
| Sales, royalties         | 2938                | 3451                |
| Other Income (see below) | <u>26648</u>        | <u>0</u>            |
|                          | <b><u>61324</u></b> | <b><u>40317</u></b> |

- b. Expenditure was:

|                      |                     |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Grants               | 1700                | 1850                |
| Publications         | 28445               | 8699                |
| Conferences          | 5746                | 11008               |
| Management and admin | 7658                | 8980                |
|                      | <b><u>43549</u></b> | <b><u>30537</u></b> |
| Net income           | 17775               | 9780                |

Total net resources were 9780 compared to 17775 for 2023.

Value of investments at 31 March 2024 was 832119 an increase of 120463 compared to 2023. Cash held at 31 March 2024 was 26582 a decrease of 36014 compared to 2023. A transfer of 30,000 cash to investments reduced cash and increased the value of the investments during the year.

Father Peter Harris  
Honorary Treasurer

### *3. Membership Report*

The membership of the Society at 31 March 2024 comprised 147 individual members in Britain and Ireland, 29 international individual members, and 21 religious houses, dioceses and small libraries.

The following have joined (or rejoined) the Society: Mr Paul Beardsmore, James Bracewell, Dr Jamie Callison, Dr John Chant, Mrs Delyth Chappell, Rev Dr Anthony Crisp, Ms Clare M. Elder, Prof Stephen Henders, Mr Godfrey Heyman, Dr Victor Houlston, Miss Molly Ailsa Ingham, Ms Madison Keightley-Phillipps, Mrs Helen Knight, Ms Victoria Love, Ms Esther Rollinson, Mr Stephen Screech, Mr Mark Shearwood, Mr Peter Sims-Coomber, Mr Henry Sire, Mr Peter Stiffell, Ms Hàighlèagh Winslade.

The Society has noted with sadness the deaths of Fr Brian Croughan. *Jesu mercy; Mary pray.*

Dr Carmen M. Mangion, Membership Secretary  
*membership@crs.org.uk*

### *4. Editorial Reports*

#### *4. a Volumes*

#### **Publications in press and in preparation**

The Records Series volume of the correspondence of Anne Percy, Countess of Northumberland, has gone out to members this year.

The final typescript of a collection of essays on twentieth-century lay apostolates for the Monographs Series has gone to Boydell for printing.

Professor Bill Sheils is editing the Michael Hodgetts memorial volume for the Monographs Series, to be delivered to Boydell in September and circulated to members next year and our sincere thanks go to him for taking on this task

Editorial work is ongoing on the Records Series volume of Little Malvern Letters II, which will hopefully also go to press late this year and out to members next year.

An edition and translation of Anthony Champney's manuscript annals of Queen Elizabeth's reign has been received and editorial work will begin once the Little Malvern Letters II has gone to Boydell.

#### **Other matters**

It is proposed that the CRS website should include a section for prospective authors/editors of volumes, inviting them to make a submission, providing a style guide (or a link to the Boydell & Brewer style guide) and an email address on which to contact the series editor.

Concerns raised about the quality of Latin transcription and translation in recent volumes are being addressed through the addition of an additional reminder during the editorial procedure to double check these.

Dr Paul Arblaster  
Chair of Volumes Committee

#### *4. b. Journal*

The work of the journal continues. This year we have made a full transition to an Online Peer Review System, so that all authors can submit their work electronically. This brings the journal into line with other academic journals and should streamline the experience for prospective authors. Members of the CRS are welcome to submit scholarly research articles for consideration and review.

CRS has signed a new contract with Cambridge University Press and continues to work towards further Open Access content.

Looking ahead, a forthcoming issue of the journal includes a report and reflection on the ‘Counting Catholicism’ project, discussed in no. 7 below, which may be of particular interest to CRS members.

Dr Katy Gibbons  
Editor, *British Catholic History*

#### *5. Awards made from CRS research funds*

Thanks to the generosity of the late Dr David Rogers and the late Mgr Michael E. Williams, former members of the Society, the Society is able to offer small annual research grants.

Grants for 2023 have been awarded to:

Dr Anna-Rose Shack Teaching Assistant, University of Amsterdam £850 for a research visit to Cambridge University Library rare books reading room for her project “Ghosts, statues, and legacy: animating Saint Ignatius of Loyola in seventeenth-century anti-Catholic satire”. Dr Shack notes that she anticipates submitting an article to *BCH* from this research.

Drs Dianne Kirby (Independent), Maria Power (Blackfriars Hall, Oxford) and Deirdre Rafferty (UCD, Dublin) £1080 to fund the filming of two witness seminars in Belfast for their project “Women Religious and the Troubles in Northern Ireland: creating an oral history archive”.

Professor Bill Sheils  
Chair of Awards Committee

#### *6. CRS Conference 2023 Report*

The 65<sup>th</sup> CRS Conference was held at Hinsley Hall, Leeds, from 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July as a hybrid conference. 63 people attended.

The three keynote lectures were:

Rev. Professor John Morrill (University of Cambridge): “New technologies, new perspectives: Interrogating Oliver Cromwell and Catholics”.

Dr Ayshah Johnston (Black Cultural Archives, UK): “Black founder in a segregated order: Jessie

Ripoll and the evolution of the Sisters of Mercy in Jamaica, 1880 to 1943”.

Dr Jamie Callison (University of Agder, Norway): “ ‘Fools to the World’: Transatlantic Connections in the Twentieth-Century Arts and Crafts Retreats Movements”.

There were six panels for shorter papers, usually three per panel: Navigating Anti-Catholicism; Archives and Manufacturing Memories; New Perspectives on Religious Orders; Catholic Religious Communities and Social Activism; National Identity and Catholicism in Britain and Ireland; and Global Catholicism and British and Irish Catholics.

As Honorary Patron, Bishop Nicholas Hudson was present and offered the Requiem Mass for deceased members of the Society.

All participants were invited to complete a feedback form from which the following main points were drawn: Hinsley Hall was experienced as a very hospitable venue for the conference; the livestreaming had worked effectively; the spread of papers could be enhanced by the inclusion of more on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but the papers given were highly appreciated, as was the drinks reception and opportunities for conversation and exchange throughout the conference.

Dr Helen Kilburn  
Conference Director

## 6. *Constitutional Review*

As members have been notified, we are in the process of undertaking a full review of the CRS Constitution. This is our governing document which sets out our charitable objects and the administrative provisions by which the Society operates. Our current Constitution was drawn up in 1964 and, apart from very minor changes, has not been amended since then. The Constitution as presently set out, requires review. It no longer reflects, or allows, for the way we work today. The main drivers for the review have been the need for greater transparency and accountability in the governing document; a clarification of the role and responsibility of the trustees; updated provisions to ensure delivery of the Society’s objectives and to ensure full compliance with Charity Law.

Over the past year the Council has conducted a clause-by-clause review of the Constitution to ensure it is fit for today’s management purposes. This does NOT alter the Charitable Objects which remain the same, viz: The Advancement of Education in Connection with the History of Roman Catholicism in England and Wales since the Reformation.

Members have been informed of the review via the Newsletter and given the opportunity to provide feedback. On 28 May 2024 we circulated the amended draft to members for consideration and comment prior to presentation at the AGM on 23 July 2024. Comments received will be considered at the meeting.

The main amendments are at:

### Clause 3

Here we clarify who are the trustees of the Society as defined by Charity Law. The original provision allowed for three different types of trustee and caused confusion around issues of accountability. We propose simplifying this as set out at Clause 3. Here you will see there are only two types of trustees: those elected at the AGM and three appointed by the elected trustees for their specialist knowledge to edit the Volumes and Journal of the Society (see also Clause 5).

### Clause 4

Allows for the appointment of specific sub-committees to assist the Council in its delivery of the Society's objects. These will report on their activities to the Council. In practice this already happens today but we wanted to show due diligence for the running of the Society by including the provision in the Constitution.

#### Clause 6

The provision to appoint a president and patrons has been simplified and the reference to Custodial Trustees removed here.

Dr Scholastica Jacob  
Hon. Secretary

### 7. *Communications and Online Engagement*

Towards the end of last year, we were delighted to launch our first digital project- 'Catholicism in Numbers'. The resource was produced by Tim Kinnear, a PhD student at St Mary's University, Twickenham, and takes data from Catholic Directory publications and other sources to draw out statistics on a range of topics relating to Catholicism in Britain and Ireland. At a glance, users can download statistics and figures relating to baptisms, conversions, marriages, mass attendance, ordinations, and the number of priests, as well as information on the overall Catholic population, places of worship, religious congregations, and schools and pupils. Each dataset gives national figures as well as diocesan estimates, features tables and graphs for ease of use, and contain notes on sources and methodology.

The CRS aims to continue to develop the resource, hopeful that other scholars and academics with their own datasets will add to the project. A press release about the project was picked up by several newspapers and websites, including the *Catholic Herald*, *Universe Catholic Weekly*, *Catholic Vote*, Association of Catholic Priests (Ireland), and has also featured on a reading list for a course at the University of Glasgow. An article based on the findings is due to be published in *British Catholic History*.

In 2024 we undertook a thorough review of our own digital resources and the 'state of play' concerning other digital resources available. From this, it was determined that we wanted to enhance the quality of the scans of back issues of the Record series from 1905 to 2006 that are currently on our website with optical character recognition (OCR) software. This was completed in April by a company offering a competitive price, and the new enhanced scans are currently being uploaded to Issuu and will be available shortly on our website. We are taking this first step in the hopes of developing a digital hub of resources, possibly including rare out of print Catholic journals and resources, for the website.

As with all our activities, we strongly encourage members interested in providing digital resources or working in partnership to get in touch. This can be done directly via contacting Dr Temple at [communications@crs.org.uk](mailto:communications@crs.org.uk).

Dr Liam Temple

### 8. *Thanks*

The Society remains grateful all those whose generosity has ensured its smooth-running and ongoing success in the last year.



## *Minutes of the AGM of 2023*

### *Minutes of the AGM of 2023*

*held at Hinsley Hall, Leeds on 25 July 2023 at 12:15*

**Apologies** had been received from Dr Paul Arblaster, Dr Maria Power

1. **Minutes of the 2022 AGM.** These were agreed as a true record; there were no matters arising.

2. **Annual Report 2022-23 was presented.**

a. **Chair's Report** Dr O'Brien spoke to her report and explained the new agreement with Boydell & Brewer (para 3). There was a general discussion regarding the move towards Open Access publishing (para 4). Dr Temple reported that good progress was being made on the digitisation projects (para 5). The current position regarding the Treasurer (para 8) was discussed and members asked to consider any future dominations for this important role. Mr Patrick Powell was thanked for his services as honorary treasurer for the last five years and appreciation expressed to Fr Peter Harris for agreeing to fill this vacancy for an interim period.

b. **The Financial report.** Fr Harris reported that the finances remain sound and the financial position of the Society is healthy.

c. The appointment of Dr Jacob as honorary secretary was confirmed by the meeting.

The Annual Report was adopted *nem con*.

3. **Annual Accounts 2022-23.**

Timothy Fenwick raised a question about the recording of the residue of the Andrew Duncan Trusts. Fr Harris referred to clarification of this given at para 2, p. 5 of the Annual Report.

The Annual Accounts were adopted *nem con*.

4. **Council**

Dr Carmen Mangion was elected for a further three-year term, proposed by Dr Kilburn and seconded by Dr Temple.

5. **Date and venue of AGM in 2024.**

The venue for future AGM and conference was discussed. Dr Kilburn asked for feedback from delegates on their experience of Hinsley Hall, which was generally favorable. Absent members will be contacted for their views. The date and venue will be confirmed by Council.

**AOB.**

There was no other business.



*The 2024 Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Record Society  
will held at the*

AGENDA

1. **Apologies** for absence *to be taken as read, having been submitted to the Secretary in advance.*
  
2. **Minutes of the 2023 AGM & Matters Arising**
3. **Adoption of the Annual Report 2023-24**
4. **Adoption of the Annual Accounts 2023-24**
5. **Constitutional Review**
6. **Council**  
  
*Dr Peter Nockles has served the full term of his office and is no longer eligible for re-election. Professor Judith Champ, Dr Maria Power and Fr Peter Harris have come to the end of their first three-year term and are eligible for re-election. There are five Council vacancies to be filled.*
6. **Date and venue of AGM in 2025**
7. **Any Other Business** *to be submitted to the Secretary in advance.*

**CRS Annual General Meeting 2024**

**Thursday 23 July at 12.15pm. At  
Hinsley Hall, Leeds**