

**BROUGHTON CATHOLIC CHARITABLE SOCIETY**  
**SECRETARY'S REPORT**  
**TUESDAY 30 May 2023**

Welcome to the 235th Whitsun AGM and Lunch.

2022-23 has proved to be a very busy year as Secretary. Since March 2022 I have had the added responsibility of administering and maintaining the Society's finances, bank accounts and accountancy system following the resignation of the Treasurer. During this time, I have kept the 'books' up to date, recorded and banked all membership fees and donations, and prepared the accounts for external audit. I am very pleased that Dr Eric Bolton has recently agreed to take on this role, and we are working together to facilitate this transition.

The role of Secretary is very demanding and practicably impossible without help. My thanks go to my wife Helen once again for assistance in proof-reading, and copious cups of tea, our President Mr Stephen Evans who has taken on the joint burdens of arranging the President's Mass and the raffle at the Christmas lunch, and members of the Board of Management who have assisted at various stages throughout the year.

I would like to thank Mr Mike Cowley who has recently joined the Board as a Lancaster Diocesan representative, and has been invaluable in assisting with organising Masses for our deceased Lay & Priest Members of the Society. Thanks also to the Hotel Staff in particular Julie & Chris who have been very helpful.

The Board have met regularly throughout the year and have endeavoured to ensure that the Society is represented within the Dioceses of Lancaster, Salford, Shrewsbury and the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Lay representatives are needed for Salford Diocese and Liverpool Archdiocese – can you help?

We welcome Canon Aidan Prescott VG (Liverpool) and Rev Fr Francis Marsden (Liverpool) on to the Board.

Our grateful thanks go to Mr David Tetlow who has now stepped down from the Board and we wish him well.

I will be looking to continue increasing the use of email as a form of communication during 2023-24. The Newsletter covers all events during 2023-24 and Broughtoners are asked to retain the Newsletter as it has booking forms for Autumn and Christmas events as well as information on setting up a standing order to pay membership fees and donations. *Your membership number is always shown on your address label.*

The Website continues to be maintained and we have a Society Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/broughtonsociety](http://www.facebook.com/broughtonsociety).

We continue to welcome ladies as members of the Society and to our social events. Priest members are particularly welcome, and we look forward to their company, but we need to increase their numbers. I would ask all members to encourage more Priests to join and help the oldest Catholic Charitable Society in England stay in business!

115 Broughtoners joined us for our AGM and Whitsun Lunch in 2022 and 78 members and guests joined the Society for our Annual Christmas Lunch on 11 December and a very joyous, musical and festive celebration was had by all.

We welcomed recipients of the 2022 Almsgiving during our President's Mass and meal at Blackpool on 25 September 2022, and handed out cheques to the value of £2,540 on the day to 3 petition representatives including Lancashire TAAG, Impact Youth Group and Read Easy (Preston), Photos were printed in our Annual 2023 Newsletter. We have continued to support ACE Project, YMCA Harbour House, Chorley Help the Homeless and Bolton Young Parents to the tune of £16,000 under the Relief of Hardship Framework. A board decision was taken to reduce the level of support in the final year as, unfortunately, we have not had sufficient member donations to continue the current level of support.

I would ask members, including life members, to continue to look at their level of donations to the Society. The newsletters alone cost the Society £2.50 each year to print and send out, and Spiritual Benefits (masses for deceased members), presently cost the Society nearly £60 when a member, or spouse of a life member, passes away. There are over 1,100 members, priests and spouses of life members, but only 1/3 donate regularly.

The costs of maintaining membership, newsletters, spouse benefits, postage and administration expenses are increasingly having to come out of Society reserves.

May all members of the Society who have passed away in 2022-23 Rest in Peace.

Finally, I hope you have a very enjoyable and spirited Whitsun Lunch and AGM!

**Peter Van Parys (Secretary)**