



buy religious objects hand-made in the Holy Land to raise much needed funds for the Friends of the Holy Land. This charity was established in 2009 to support the Christian community in the Holy Land. It has many parish groups working together in England and Wales under the patronage of the Archbishop of Westminster, The Most Reverend Vincent Nichols, and the Archbishop of Liverpool, The Most Reverend Patrick Kelly.

Dom Antony Sutch, OSB, formerly Headmaster of Downside School in Somerset is currently parish priest at St Benet's Church in Beccles, which is a Downside parish. Father Antony, as he prefers to be known, frequently contributes to "Thought for the Day" on Radio Four and appears regularly in both the broadcast and printed media. Both Grand President and Dom Antony received standing ovations and loud acclaim.

and Province 11 Director Tony and Madelaine Sadler. There were three excellent speeches by John Sylvester, Bishop Tom Williams and Grand President. The speeches this year were kept shorter than in many years past. This gave time for dancing to Swing Unlimited Big Band. Grand President's grandchildren joined in the dancing and judging by the number of people taking to the dance floor, the evening was a great success. Towards the end of the evening Grand President, Grand Secretary and their wives visited those enjoying the Carnival evening hosted by Grand Vice President, Tony Godden, at the Royal Bath Hotel. Dancing at the Carnival was to the Regular Joes. Reports indicate that the band, the flying balloons and the party hats all contributed to a most enjoyable evening for all who attended.



**Bishop Tom Williams addresses the company at the Banquet with Grand President Vernon and Evelyn DeCruz, and Lucia and His Excellency David Smith**

Whilst the brothers gathered for the Conference meeting, their wives had the opportunity of joining either of two superb tours around Dorset or one walking tour of Bournemouth itself. The first tour centred on the ancient town of Christchurch and the 11th century priory containing the tomb chapel of the martyr, Blessed Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury who was beheaded in 1541. The ladies also enjoyed a cruise on the River Stour. Another tour took in Kingston Lacey House (National Trust). This is famous for its collection of Old Masters by such acclaimed artists as Titian, Brueghel and Van Dyck and its extensive gardens. Finally there was the walking tour of Bournemouth now celebrating its bicentenary of its founding in 1810.

After a break for coffee, the private business of Conference commenced. The motion proposing a change to Rule 28, proposed by Stephen Thornton of East Grinstead Circle, led to some lively discussion and debate but it was finally defeated by those present. With only one motion being submitted to Conference, there was time for a presentation on successful membership recruitment given by Chris Richards, Provincial Membership Officer, and Brian Towler, Provincial President, both from Province 19.

Immediately following the Conference session Grand President held a reception at the Highcliff Hotel.

Saturday afternoon was spent exploring Bournemouth's rambling shopping areas and glorious beaches, although it was a little too chilly for any water sports.

The two functions arranged for Saturday were as popular as ever. It was a pleasant moonlit evening and the sea was like a millpond, as brothers, wives and friends made their way to the Royal Bath Hotel or to the Purbeck Hall at the BIC. Although as ever, coaches were on hand to transport people to the venues, I noticed many took advantage of the pleasant Dorset evening to stroll from their hotels.

Joining Grand President Vernon and Evelyn on Top Table at the Banquet were Bishop Tom Williams, His Excellency David Smith and his wife Lucia and Immediate Past Grand President Joe and Philomena McNally. Others were Grand Treasurer Phil and Angela Roberts, John and Jean Sylvester of Woking Circle, Grand Secretary Jim and Anne Quinn



**The Rt Rev Bishop Crispian Hollis at the Mass on the Sunday**

The High Mass was, as usual, a highlight of the Conference and was held in the Tregonwell Hall. The chief celebrant was the Bishop of Portsmouth the Rt Rev Crispian Hollis assisted by four Deacon members of the Association. The whole Mass was choreographed by Colin Morrell of Poole Circle (MC) and Stephen Morgan (Deacon) of Salisbury Circle. Special mention must be made of the superb choir of Corpus Christi Church, Bournemouth, the Director of Music, Sean O'Connell, and the organist Richard Scott-Copeland. The soloist was Alison De Winter, whose rendition of Panis Angelicus during communion, struck a spiritual cord amongst all those present.



**Big Band music for dancing at the Banquet was a popular feature**

Grand President made his superb address to Conference and Dom Antony Sutch gave the Keynote Address. Both addresses are published in Catena.



**The superb choir of Corpus Christi Church, Bournemouth**