

Chichester Cathedral Mass

Who would have even contemplated 100 years ago that Catholics could share Anglican Cathedrals for Masses as the Association has done this past 12 months.

The Mass on 4th April 2009 in Chichester Cathedral organised by Arundel, Chichester and Portsmouth Circles was the last of six such Masses held during our Centenary year, with the kind permission of the Dean and Chapter, who gave the organisers so much help and enthusiastic support in creating something so special.

The day dawned somewhat grey and damp, but by 11am the sun was shining and the temperature rose accordingly.

At precisely 2pm, Grand Vice President Joe McNally, accompanied by Philomena, arrived at the west entrance, shortly joined by the Cathedral Precentor, Canon Tim Schofield to greet Brothers and their wives and families from all over the south, and the Nave soon filled with up to 500 Catenians and friends in this wonderful 900 year-old Cathedral.

At 3pm, Canon Tim, the Cathedral Precentor addressed the congregation by welcoming the Catenians and expressing delight on behalf of the Dean, Nicholas Frayling and the Bishop of Chichester (both being currently in Europe on official duties) to the ancient Cathedral on this ecumenical occasion.

The Knights of St Gregory and Knights and a Dame of the Holy Sepulchre were in place, together with Grand Vice President and Grand Vice President—elect Vernon De Cruz and their wives, the Mayor of Chichester, David Siggs, The Princess Renata Sapieha, Past Grand President Gerald Soane with Pauline, two Directors and four Provincial Presidents, for the processional entrance of the Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, Kieran Conry, preceded by some 20 Priests and deacons, led by the

thurifer, James Fitzpatrick, of East Grinstead Circle and Cross bearer, Joe Fackler of Seaford Circle including servers David Hiley (Eastbourne) Dennis Anscombe who has been serving on the altar for 75 years in his own Parish of Storrington and Dr James Walsh, both of Arundel Circle with three daughters of Catenians, all under Master of Ceremonies, Ian Fricker of Arundel Circle.

All Priests wore purple vestments, with the Bishop adorned in the Catenian Millennium chasuble.



Over 30 members of the St Richard's Singers under their musical director Michael Walsh, accompanied on the magnificent organ by Patricia D'Avray, provided some wonderful singing and musical accompaniment throughout the Mass. Pat is organist at Arundel Cathedral, and is the daughter of late Chichester Brother, Tony D'Avray.

Joe McNally gave the first reading and Jerome O'Hea (Chichester) read the Responsorial Psalm, whilst Deacon Seamus Mahon read the Gospel.

Bishop Kieran in his Homily noted that he was an honorary Canon of the Cathedral although his chair seemed to have disappeared on this occasion, and in his welcome to so many Catenians and attending Priests and Deacons, including the Rev David Farrar, late Bishop of an Anglican Diocese in the Victoria area in Australia, was generous in his reference to the Catenians and the achievement of reaching our Centenary, asking who would

belong to an organisation that is ancient, full of ritual, behind the times, difficult in its ways, and then is the Catenian Association!

The Bidding Prayers were composed for the occasion by John Doyle, and read by David Lodrick, both of Portsmouth Circle. At the Centenary Conference in Manchester last May, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor presented each Provincial President with a Ciborium, and four of these were used during Communion.

The offertory collection was for

the Association's centenary appeal of Give Water, Life and Hope and the three Circles' contributions go to Cafod for distribution in Zimbabwe, thus raising the target to over the £130,000 mark at the time, collected during the past year.

The Mass ended with some lusty singing, and what better way to be played out than with Vidor's Toccata. A retiring collection was taken for the Cathedral Restoration fund. We were reminded that it costs £3000 per day to maintain this magnificent building.

Afterwards tea was provided for the Priests (those not hurrying back to their Parishes for Mass on the eve of Palm Sunday), and other dignitaries to join in a special occasion of the presentation of bouquets by Bishop Kieran and Grand Vice President Joe McNally to Jerome and Elizabeth O'Hea of Chichester Circle and John and Geraldine Hennon of Arundel Circle, both couples celebrating their 50th wedding anniversaries to the day, having been married

on Saturday 4th April 1959.

In conversation with the Verger, Howard, after the Mass, he commented on how impressed were the Cathedral staff with the slick way in which both the collection was taken, and the Communion distributed for such a crowded congregation.

He also commented that when they had as many at a service, it took them much longer to gather and distribute, but did add that their congregation was somewhat older. Older than Catenians? This was of course, due to the magnificent stewarding under the direction of Jim Edwards, President of Arundel and his 18 volunteers from the three organising circles with the help of two Cathedral stewards.

On Saturday evening to conclude the celebrations, Brothers Joe McNally, Vernon De Cruz, Gil Whale, editor of "Catena", Directors Martin Klust of Province 18 and Tony Sadler, of Province 11, Provincial President of Province 18, Jim Fitzpatrick, four priests, the Hennons and the organising committee and their Ladies joined in the general hubbub at the "Nag's Head", a local Chichester hostelry, for a noisy but enjoyable meal.

On Sunday Joe and Philomena McNally attended the 10 am Palm Sunday Mass at St Richard's Church in Chichester, itself having celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, where a plaque presented and installed by the Chichester Catenians caught Joe's eye.

This is in memory of Chichester's founder President, Dave O'Connell, whose paintings in the Church include the Crucifixion behind the altar, and the paintings of the Stations of the Cross.

Dave also designed the Grand President's Chain of Office in 1952, the year following Chichester Circle's inauguration, and soon to be in the safe keeping of and worn by Brother Joe during his Grand Presidential year.

Report by Michael O'Neill, Press officer of Chichester Circle, with photo by Ann McDonald

Christchurch Priory Mass

The altar of Christchurch Priory with the New Forest Circle lectern cover

On Sunday, 21st September 2008, over 800 people crowded into the historic Priory Church at Christchurch in Dorset for the first Mass to be celebrated there since the Reformation.

The Mass had been organised by New Forest Circle as a Mass of Thanksgiving for the Centenary of the Association and was concelebrated by the Bishop of Portsmouth, Crispian Hollis together with priests from all three Dioceses covered by Province 11.

The Vicar of Christchurch, Canon Hugh Williams welcomed all to the ancient priory church and commented that it was a marvellous display of the ecumenical spirit between the Christian Churches. Bishop Crispian in his homily praised Catenians as evangelisers and commented on the active role so many played in the lives of their own parishes and he paid tribute to the founders whose foresight and endeavours had been rewarded through the commitment of its members during the last 100 years.

The chalice used by the Bishop had been made by one of the widows of the Circle, Noreen Farr, and had been presented to the Priory some years ago.

The Bishop thought that the Anglican Fraternity might have been surprised by the use of incense but the chief verger expressed disappointment as he thought the church would have been filled with incense it being a Catholic service. It seems the Priory use a lot more incense than us in their services!

Brothers and their families from across the Province were joined by a great number of local laity of all denominations which far exceeded the expectations of the organisers. The choir from Corpus Christi Church in Bournemouth, which included several Bournemouth Circle brothers, led the congregation in their singing, notably in the rendition of the National Anthem and the final hymn 'Jerusalem'.

The present Priory church was begun in 1094 but there is evidence of a church on the site in the 8th century and probably even in the 6th century. The last Lord of the Manor here was Blessed Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury and mother of Cardinal Reginald Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury. Alongside the main altar is a beautiful marble chantry, built by a pupil of Michelangelo and intended as her tomb. This was not to be as she was beheaded in the Tower of London in 1541. The name of the town was changed when a popular belief in the 12th Century held that Christ himself had worked as a carpenter on the church giving rise to the legend of the Miraculous Beam where a beam cut too short for the span needed was found in place and of the right length the next day.

Thanks are due to Past President Tom Morley whose brilliant idea it was and to all who organised this event and also to the Anglican community for their support, especially the Chief Verger, Richard Newell, whose help was invaluable.



Gerry O'Neill, President of New Forest Circle not giving the homily but welcoming the congregation



Bishop Crispian in full voice with Deacons David Croucher of Isle of Wight Circle (left) and Stephen Short of New Forest Circle

Centenary Mass at Cartmel Priory

On Saturday 14th June 2008, after many months of planning and organisation by Furness, Westmorland and North Lancashire Circles, a congregation of over 300 brothers, wives and friends attended the Province 10 Centenary Mass in the historic Cartmel Priory. The Priory was founded



in the 12th century by Augustinian monks and Augustinian Sisters from the nearby Boarbank Hall were also present.

Immediate Past Grand President, Philip and Arleen Gidman, were the principal guests present at the event, which was hosted by the three Presidents Brian Tate (Furness), Brian Hargreaves (Westmorland) and Wilf Gill (North Lancashire) (pictured above).

The principal celebrant was Bishop Patrick O'Donohue, Bishop of Lancaster, assisted by Monsignor Francis Slattery and six other priests from parishes based in the catchment areas of the three Circles. Brothers representing the three Circles acted as altar servers for the Mass and as ushers and collectors in the Priory. Brian Dickinson (Garstang) played the organ and the choir from the church of Christ the King in Milnthorpe led the congregation in the hymns.

Because of the large attendance two venues were used for the refreshments which followed the Mass. Some 130 brothers and wives enjoyed a buffet in the Members' suite at Cartmel Racecourse while a further 100 brothers and wives had a similar buffet in Cartmel Village Hall.

After a shaky start to the day even the weather was glorious and everyone present agreed that it was wonderful experience to be present and a great advertisement for the Association.