

# CASSOC



# NEWS

Issue 1 - Autumn Term 2004

The University of Bristol Catholic Autonomous Students' Society  
Termly Newsletter

[www.bristol.cassoc.org.uk](http://www.bristol.cassoc.org.uk)



Welcome to Bristol! Or welcome back to returning students. As the Catholic Chaplain I look forward to welcoming you into the life of the Chaplaincy. As you will see from this Newsletter, the Chaplaincy seeks to provide a spiritual home for the University's Catholic Community.

I hope that this academic year will be a blessed opportunity of growth and new experiences. Church teaching refers to the Mass as the source and summit of Catholic daily life. I very much hope that the Chaplaincy will facilitate the celebration of our Catholic faith and life as a place where we can come together in worship and socially to praise God and explore what it means to be a Catholic in today's world.

As well as myself the pastoral team includes Annabel and Sr Moira who are available as someone to talk to and for Spiritual direction. This year Tim Behrsin will assist me in the administration of the Chaplaincy as Chaplaincy Assistant. More importantly the Chaplaincy community includes you and I look forward to your becoming a part or continued participation.

Yours,

**Fr Robert King**

## Student Masses

**Mass** is held at **6pm every Sunday evening** during term time at the Catholic Chaplaincy which is situated in Queen's Road next door to the Students' Union, by the two roundabouts. This is always followed by free sandwiches in our licensed bar downstairs and the inevitable trip to the pub. **Weekday Masses** are also held at the Chaplaincy on **Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8.15 am.**

This year for the first time there will be a weekly Mass held at the Stoke Bishop halls of residence, at **7:45 on Tuesday evenings in Hiatt Baker Hall.**

## Who's who in Cassoc

### President

Gwyn Henning  
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### Vice-President

Matthew French  
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### Treasurer

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### Secretary

Matthew Boyle  
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### Publicity Team

Tim Chiosso, Dick Brooks, Peter Martin,  
Ollie Lowson

### Social Team

Chris Willcox, Monica Brennan,  
Anne-Marie Czastka, Patrick Williams

## The Chaplaincy Music Group

On arrival at University two years ago as a somewhat bewildered fresher, the Catholic Chaplaincy provided me with a friendly, vibrant faith community. Having grown up playing the flute in my parish church, I was particularly delighted to discover the existence of the Chaplaincy Music Group. Each year, the Group invites new members, both singers and instrumentalists. Everyone who is interested is welcomed, regardless of age, ability and experience, the only pre-requisite being enthusiasm!

The main focus of the Music Group is the provision of music at the Chaplaincy's weekly Sunday night worship. The Group meets to practise before Mass, during which time the evening's hymns are chosen. These range from the traditional to the contemporary, and new ideas are always welcome. One of the great strengths of the Chaplaincy is the diversity of its members, and the music of the Mass is one way in which this variety can be celebrated.

Aside from ordinary Sunday services, the Music Group is often called upon to make a particular contribution to certain Masses of significance. Over the past year we have been involved in several such special occasions, including the Chaplaincy Healing Mass, end of term Masses, and a visit by Bishop Declan of the Clifton Diocese. The music was also an important part of the retreat to Stratton-on-the-Fosse, where we played both within the retreat house, and at Our Lady St Mary of Glastonbury Church in Glastonbury.

Perhaps the two most memorable services for the Music Group were those which commemorated the Chaplaincy's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The first of these took place in a packed Clifton Cathedral. We were aware that for many local parishioners, it would be the first time they had attended a Mass hosted by Bristol University students. Consequently, we took it as an opportunity to demonstrate the gifts and character of the Chaplaincy, and much time and effort went into selecting the music and rehearsing. The result was a lively celebration with some very spirited singing, for which we received many thanks from the congregation.

The second occasion was the official Anniversary Mass held in the Chaplaincy and attended by an impressive array of past and present pupils, chaplains and visitors. Many attendees were former members of the Music Group, and they took great pleasure in returning to join in the music and see how things had moved on.

It has always been considered that the Group's role should not be confined to playing at Masses, but that it has a particular opportunity to help others through its music. In recognition of this, the Music Group this year decided to visit St Angela's Home for the Elderly and perform some Christmas carols. We were delighted to be accompanied by an extensive (and very festive!) collection of singers, culminating in an event which the participants enjoyed every bit as much as our audience! It was very gratifying, and rather humbling, to see the difference that the music made to the residents' Christmas, who thanked us by providing a mountain of mince pies and biscuits!



Joining the Music Group is both a valuable and enjoyable means of contributing to the life of the chaplaincy through the expression of talents. On a personal level, membership has provided me with a unique way to worship and its members have become an important part of my University world.

*If you would like to join the Music Group this year, come and join in the practice before Mass on Sunday 3rd October at 5.00pm. We would love to see you!*

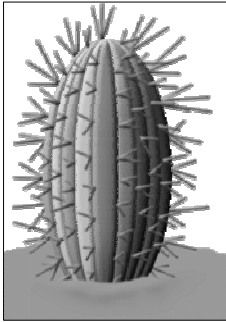
**Rebecca Kay**

Quote

*"Pay me 7 quid and I'll leave you alone" - Matt "EU" French*

# THE WILD WEST PARTY

Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2004 began as normal in the quiet rural town of Bristol. The townsfolk went about their



everyday business, dusting their crops, tending to their cattle, buying their groceries from the store. However, by sundown, there was trouble. At sun up next morning, the townsfolk were picking up the pieces of the night's shenanigans and trying to return to their normal lives. By piecing together sketchy memories of that night and surviving scraps of Reverend King's diary, it has been possible to reconstruct the events of that chaotic night.

It began mid-afternoon on the Friday, when the horsemen (and women) of Cardiff rode into town (Cardiff Cathsoc). They had heard of the \$5000 reward for the capture of Reverend Robert King (Fr Robert), the notorious vicar who had eluded the county sheriff for many months. It was not



long before the search led them to the local saloon. By the early evening, word had reached the locals, and the townsfolk made their way to the saloon. Before long, the place was packed.



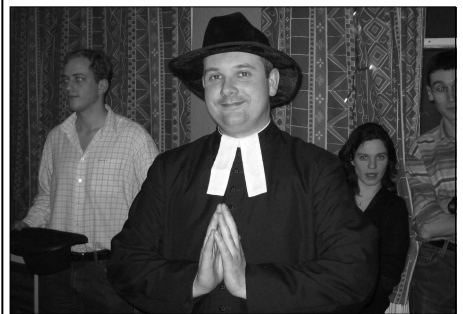
The locals and the strangers mingled. After eating their fill high jinks broke out in plenty. Before long both the townsfolk and visiting cowboys and cowgirls were dancing away to fiddles and the guitars. No one cared that Indians had showed up, or noticed that the Reverend was enjoying a glass of the bartender's finest liquor at a table in the corner.



When the whisky ran dry, things got bad.



The bar was out of whisky. The sheriff got angry. That was all he drank. He threatened the bartender with his firearm. Guns were drawn by the rest of the clientele, but the good Reverend bravely stepped in to resolve the dispute. He suggested that the bartender should sell his personal supply of whisky to the sheriff. The bartender complied with his advice and tensions were defused.



The town had been saved from a blood bath by the wisdom of Rev. King and in return the town mayor cancelled the \$5000 bounty on his head. The next day the Cardiff posse rode out of town without their reward. Nevertheless, they had still had a mighty fine time in Bristol and made many new buddies.

**Chris Willcox**



*"Lamb is the best flavour"* - **Gwyn Henning** on her dog food preferences

## Cassoc Does Wales

On the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2004, a group of us headed over to Cardiff. We had been invited to a cocktail party, organised by **Cardiff University's Catholic Society**. A great time was had by all, and we have many good photos to prove it! Here is a **short poem** about the event:

So, we whisked down to Cardiff on a super-fast train,  
walked down to the Chaplaincy, bracing wind and rain.

We went to the art gallery for something to do,  
most of it was good, but the modern art was not.

Then we met Fr John, who's a really cool dude,  
we talked and we laughed, had giant pizza for food.

The cocktails were potent, colourful and smooth,  
they helped us to party and get into the groove.

Thumbs up for Cardiff, we made lots of friends,  
shame we got not sleep; blame Tim B. The End.

--- By Anne-Marie Czastka---



Quote

"When you're ready to come, give me a poke" - Anon, regarding going to the pub

## Cassoc Christmas Chaos

Candles, Carols, elegantly dressed girls in evening dresses, young men in suits. This was the sight that greeted a visitor to the Catholic Chaplaincy on a cold Christmas night last December. I saw more than one member of our congregation staring around in bemusement as they stood, dressed in their ordinary clothes next to a member of Cassoc, dressed in all their finery.

It was the night of the renowned Cassoc Christmas dinner, and once Mass was over the congregation found themselves lured through to supper by the tempting smells that wafted through the halls and high-ceilinged rooms of the chaplaincy.



They were greeted by a magical sight. The library had been transformed from a book-lined study area into a room twinkling with fairy lights, festooned in mistletoe and dripping with tinsel. The long tables dominated the room, covered as they were in bright table-cloths, candles, chocolate money and for some reason (probably best known to the decorators) mandarin oranges. Even I, having been a helper, agreed that this year Cassoc had really outdone themselves in the decoration. We had spent the whole afternoon working on making the evening really special for our little community, and (apart from a few disasters involving tinsel, naked flames and hastily beating mistletoe) we had succeeded to the best

of our abilities in giving the room a Christmas makeover that no one was going to forget in a hurry.

In spite of difficulties arising from the fact she had a meal to cook for forty people with only two highly temperamental ovens and an Olympic-style obstacle to climb over, just to get to the kitchen, Sarah Neagle had provided us with the most exquisite Christmas meal. Following a delicious first-course of prawns came great steaming plates of meat, vegetables, potatoes and stuffing, and huge traditional Christmas logs, all beautifully prepared and presented for everyone to tuck into.



In spite of the huge meal we'd just consumed, by the end of the evening, the tables were also devoid of their lovely chocolate-money-and-orange decorations as well, and the wine was really beginning to flow. Unsurprisingly, as the wine decreased the chattering and laughter increased, and after a short time, inhibitions were put aside for a night of impressive (if slightly unusual) displays of dancing and singing that had everyone in fits of laughter by the end of the evening.



Gradually, as time wore on, people began drifting home through the cool Christmas evening, faces lit with the afterglow of a night of wonderful companionship, grown and developed after only one term of knowing each other.

**Gwynnifer Henning**

Quote

*"I won't give publication permission" - Tim Behrsin, regarding his love poems*

## Cassoc Retreat to Stratton-on-the-Fosse, November 2003

Once we'd all negotiated our way out of Bristol and down the winding country lanes to the picturesque Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Mass was celebrated in the house followed by a delicious roast dinner. We then went to the local pub for a drink and a few games of pool, where a good time was had by all.



Saturday morning saw us being shuttled into Glastonbury at varying times. We had Mass in the appropriately named Shrine to Our Lady of Glastonbury. The ruined Glastonbury Abbey was our next port of call (via the strawberry smelling toilets), which was beautiful if a little chilly so we made our way back to the retreat house in time for Vespers with the monks, a

memorable experience. After a guided tour of the abbey we popped down to our local for dinner and the inevitable pool tournament with Kev, the resident pool shark, who vanquished the hitherto undefeated Mr B (Dick Brooks).

Once back at the house, an all night theological discussion ensued, on topics ranging from the authority of the Bible to learning to say 'no', fuelled by farmers' market cake and Maltesers. Despite achieving an extremely small amount of sleep, we still managed to be bright eyed and bushy tailed for morning prayer. We walked through the grounds towards the abbey from the house, in the rising sun. Following Mass and a relatively lazy lunch over the newspapers, we set off home tired but rested and spiritually fulfilled.



### Rebecca Walton & Dick Brooks



### Competition!!!

You may have noticed that each page of the newsletter has a 'famous' Cassoc quote at the bottom. However, one of these quotes is not true, i.e. the person in question never actually said what is stated. Can you work out which one is false? The first person to go to the Cassoc bar after Mass with the correct answer (only one guess per person) will get a free can of their choice from the bar.

*NOTE: The competition is not open to committee members!*

Quote

*"There'll be Mass in the bar after supper" - Gwyn Henning*

## Cassoc's 40th Anniversary

It was early in the morning on a bright Summer's day in June when I returned back to the Catholic Chaplaincy with my week's groceries to find that it had been invaded in my absence by what looked like the entire British army – or at least, it would have if the British army were all young men and women, armed with dusters, hoovers, lawn-mowers and polishing cloths.

Cassoc's most recent members wanted the Chaplaincy to be literally sparkling for the upcoming reunion where all its members for the last forty years would be coming back to share memories and meet the newest community.

The whole day was a great success. Men and women of all ages arrived at the door and spread out through the house, until it was filled with people talking and exclamations that were usually along the lines of "Hey! This used to be my room! Why on earth is it bright orange now? What was wrong with maroon?" or "In my day, we had a toaster that worked. It was yellow, I remember. And you didn't have to push the bread down with the handle of a spoon."

After a lovely Mass said for us by Bishop Mervin, we had a wonderful buffet lunch that everyone ate with great relish. We were particularly amused at how quickly the Banoffi pudding and ice-cream went, and I made a note to tell its creators that they would definitely be hearing a lot more from us, particularly if all their puddings were at Banoffi standard.

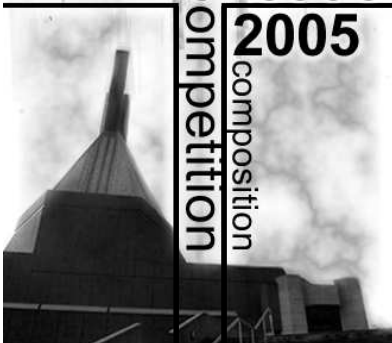
It was a day filled with happy memories, loud conversations and new friends. A great success and one we'll definitely be repeating in the next 10 years!

**Gwynnifer Henning**

Contact: Patrick Williams  
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### CASSOC Composition Competition 2004–2005



2005  
composition  
competition

This competition is a new and welcome introduction to the Cassoc calendar and is hoped to be met with great enthusiasm by both members and non-members alike. The commission is a Mass setting for the Roman Catholic ordinary rite of Mass. In other words, it will have the same movements and words as many settings by Mozart, Haydn, Vaughan Williams, or anyone else in the popular canon of composers.

The piece should be written for a small SATB choir and organ, though you are welcome to include other instruments provided that you can provide performers should your piece be chosen for performance. The music should be suitable for the spiritual setting of a church. Much new music for liturgical use can be so dry and uninspiring – we are looking for music that empowers the words it illustrates and draws the congregation's attention, whilst focussing them on the purpose for their presence at the Mass.

The judges will be looking for distinguishing characteristics of individual submissions that meet or exceed the criteria stated above to fulfil the purpose of the music. Entrants will be informed of the judges' decisions by the end of January 2005. The music group will begin to prepare a performance of the music for as many platforms as can be arranged. The piece will be sung at Mass at the University Catholic Chaplaincy, and possibly at Clifton Cathedral later in the year – an opportunity not to be missed! Arrangements are also being made for a performance of the setting at a Lunchtime Concert at the Victoria Rooms, Queen's Road.

Quote

*"I'm just the old git in the corner"* - **Matt Pearson**

## This and Last Year in Cassoc....

Amongst the events Cassoc organised last year were the Christmas formal meal, including free wine(!), a weekend retreat to Stratton-on-the-Fosse near Bath, Christmas carol singing at an old people's home, fortnightly pub lunches on Wednesdays (replaced by weekly soup lunch during Lent), a number of joint events with Cardiff University Chaplaincy, the traditional visit to the pub after Mass on Sunday evening and lots more.

This year we have even more planned for you all to enjoy – and if you really feel up to a challenge you can always volunteer to help organise an event! As well as our usual Masses on Sundays at 6pm and Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 8.15am, new for this year there will be a Mass at 7.45pm on Tuesdays in Hiatt Baker Hall, followed by a visit to a hall bar.

From this year the society will be free to join. If you missed us at Freshers' Fair then send an email to Tim Chiosso at <<email address removed by request>> and he will add you to the email list so that you can keep up to date with our events.

We will continue the very popular fortnightly pub lunches on Wednesday lunchtimes. Details are announced the preceding Sunday in Mass and also via our email list. It usually involves us meeting somewhere on campus and walking a short distance to a local pub together to enjoy lunch. Pubs we have visited in the past include The Highbury Vaults, The King's Arms, The Robin Hood, The Ship and The White Hart.

Sunday evening, following Mass at 6pm in the Chapel, we have open our very own bar in the Chaplaincy house (the only society in the University to have this great facility!). Crisps and free sandwiches are provided along with a large range of alcoholic and soft drinks. We often move onto a local pub for a drink later in the evening.

In place of a retreat during term time this year a group of us will be attending the World Youth Day Event in Cologne, Germany next summer. See Tim Behrsin ([tim@behrsin.com](mailto:tim@behrsin.com)) for more details. We are also planning a camping trip in the Wye Valley during the year, so make sure you bring your sleeping bags/tents when you're at home next!

And, not to be missed – our Christmas meal – always very popular, so much so we have had to change the location this year to fit everyone in! Keep Sunday 5th December free in your diary!

As well as the social aspect, in conjunction with the Chaplaincy we sometimes have guest speakers to give a short talk on a topical subject before supper on a Sunday evening. Our flagship talk is the Aquinas Lecture, this year given on Sunday 28th November at 7:30pm in Clifton Hill House JCR. The talk will be given by Fr Aidan Nicholls OP of Blackfriars, Cambridge.

We have developed close links with Cardiff University Chaplaincy and are working on the same with other University Chaplaincies. Last year we visited Cardiff for a cocktail party and stayed the night, and Cardiff visited us for our Wild West Night.

If you want to know more about Cassoc or any of the events we have planned, email me ([mail@matthewfrench.net](mailto:mail@matthewfrench.net)) or contact any member of the committee from the front page.

**Matthew French**



**Cassoc News edited by Tim Chiosso**

Next issue out early in the Spring term. Please email any articles for the next issue to <<email address removed by request>> by the end of this term, 10th December 2004.

Quote

*"I'm just off to grease myself up" - Tim Chiosso*