



## From Father Robert

This year has been a good one for the Catholic Chaplaincy and CASSOC. It's always edifying to see the continued commitment of the more established members of our community and the enthusiasm of new students. I would like to thank Julia Giannini and the outgoing committee for their hard work. They have contributed so much to building a welcoming Catholic presence in the University of Bristol. I wish the new 'administration' well in their efforts to continue the good work of making CASSOC a great society.

University chaplaincies are by their nature transient places. Our Chaplaincy is no different as people come and go. However, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Matt French for his unwavering support and friendship to both me as Chaplain and all those who have been a part of the Chaplaincy. Julia has penned a tribute to him in this edition of the Newsletter and I'll leave it to her to make him blush.

## 'Dead Famous' Easter Party

*Alastair Russell*



Almost a year ago we had our annual fancy dress party. The theme: DEAD FAMOUS. This enabled those who attended to spend the evening with literary greats, political giants, and entertainers of the past. Despite the presence of **Audrey Hepburn** we were not quite able to muster *Breakfast At Tiffany's* but the buffet was delicious. Both **Shakespeare** and **Emily Bronte** made appearances. **Marilyn Monroe** could sing *Happy Birthday Mr President* to not one, but two **JFK's**. The turnout was so impressive that there were no *Suspicious Minds* when **Elvis Presley** arrived, with Buddy Holly flying in for the event. The American theme was continued when the unmistakable gait of cowboy **John Wayne** appeared in the doorway followed by not one, but two *Pocahontie* (plural of *Pocahontas* - I think). As the Disco went on late into the night, with the DEAD FAMOUS person's name on back game, Bristol's cheapest bar was open for business

as usual and if you were lucky you may have been served by the iconic **Che Guevara**, or shared a drink with the unparalleled **Mahatma Gandhi**. A fantastic evening was had by all and we all look forward to this year's party.

## Exeter Trip

*Julia Giannini*

After finally sorting out who was supposed to be travelling with us, and temporarily losing Dan in the station bar, we boarded our train to Exeter. Upon arrival, we were warmly greeted by the Exeter Cathsoc lot, and escorted to the Chaplaincy. We then headed out for what we thought would be a short tour of Exeter. Braving the freezing cold winds and 'cardiac' hills, we spent the next hour and a half walking around the main sights of Exeter, including the Cathedral, the Quay, and the narrowest street in Europe (Parliament Street). After working up an appetite, we returned to the Chaplaincy and ate some fantastic stew and cake for dessert. Some of us actually had quite a lot of cake. Then the karaoke machine was plugged in, and there was no turning back. For the rest of the night karaoke battles ensued (see Alastair for video evidence). 'Girls Just Wanna Have Fun', 'Its Raining Men' and 'Survivor' were just some of the songs attempted. Al and Dan even managed their own version of 'Suspicious Minds', giving them a combined score of about 2000 of a possible 20,000. In true CASSOC fashion, we boosted the bar profits in that one evening over what had been made the whole of the previous term. After finally bringing the night to an end, we retired into the Blue Room where we discovered a Superman blanket, that Jason (from Exeter) cannot walk on water, and that all that singing makes you very tired. So off to sleep we went. After breakfast and then 11.30 Mass, we met more people, ate, played cards, and then took the train back to Bristol (that somehow went through Weston-Super-Mare?). After a long week-end of meeting some great people and discovering our singing talents, we returned a little tired and husky-voiced.



## Christmas with CASSOC



*Joe Cook*

One of our female committee members wanted to see lots of male Catholics in suits. So we arranged a Christmas party. Marvellous mulled wine. Fantastic food at Pitcher and Piano. And the indisputable highlight? It's got to be the superbly sung Twelve Days of Christmas, with raucously irrelevant actions and all.

## "Can the Pope save the earth?"

*Monica Nash*

On Sunday 26th October, CASSOC were treated to a talk by Mary Colwell, on the intriguing question "Can the Pope save the earth?" Ms Colwell drew on her years of experience as a high-ranking BBC producer to bring us a challenging talk (and, afterwards, a lively discussion session) on the Catholic Church and the environment. Her talk urged a new attitude of looking at our relation to our environment sacramentally. She drew on many poignant examples of endangered species, and supplemented her talk with an impressive Powerpoint presentation featuring interviews with the likes of David Attenborough. Her talk was very thought-provoking and many of us were still discussing it later in the bar.



*Emily Rhodes*

Cast your minds back a few months – to the 19<sup>th</sup> October to be exact – and you may recall Tony Vassallo from CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) coming to speak to us after Mass. He called on us – as a community – to raise £750 in order to supply a town with running water. As the official charity of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, CAFOD seeks to respond with compassion to the poverty and suffering that exists throughout our world. Drawing inspiration from Scripture and the Church's teachings, they "promote human development and social justice in witness to Christian faith and Gospel values". By responding to this call, we – as students – are able to make a positive impact on the world around us and to loose the bonds of injustice and poverty that affect so many in our world.



The first of our fundraising events was the opening of the CASSOC bar on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October. This consisted of the usual low prices as on Sundays with a voluntary donation on the door. People brought friends along and a good time was had by all with cheap drinks and dancing. The event also marked the beginning of the name the lion competition. At just 50p a go, you could choose one of fifty saints' names with the real one being chosen at random by Fr. Robert. The lucky winner was Monica Nash with the lion's real name being St. Thomas More.

Other events have included Family Fortunes and a range of different quizzes from Bond themed to American. The Theologians of Bristol University have also done their part with donations being generously given by second and third years taking part in the day-long reading of the Dante's *Inferno*. Throughout last term, CASSOC as a whole has given generously and so far we have raised £250 of the final total, which means we've got £500 left to raise! More events are planned for this term so look out for them and if you have any ideas for fundraising please let us know.

## CASSOC Summer Barbecue

*Robin Eames*

At the end of the summer term we hosted our summer barbecue, to which we invited Exeter CathSoc. A good time was had by all who attended and we were blessed with the added bonus of it not raining. The wonderful cooking provided many laughs as it involved most of the committee ending up in tears, Julia and Monica from chopping onions and Robin and Alistair from the barbecue smoke. The other big attraction seemed, especially for the girls, to be Matt's mini. In addition to providing the outdoor sound system it seemed to provide an ideal posing platform. As darkness began to set in and we finished our Pimms and food we moved into the bar, where we carried on until well into the night. Here we listened to Sean's (the Exeter president) heavy metal radio show on which his co-presenters accused Julia of kidnapping him! All in all a good time was had by everyone and we look forward to the equivalent event this academic year.



**The Night Shelter***Dom DeBoo*

This term, a group of us from the Chaplaincy have started volunteering at the Julian Trust night shelter in St Pauls on a Friday night. Myself, Alex, Dan, Joe and Dominic Wong take it in turns to go in pairs and spend the evening preparing and serving food, chatting to the homeless guests as they come in and clearing up afterwards. Normally, this means that we get to the night shelter for roughly 8.30pm in time to help with the preparation effort. The 'guests' come in about 9.30pm for a meal and stay until 10.30pm, at which point those who are not staying the night leave and the volunteers start the clean up effort. With everyone getting involved this normally means that we are free to leave before 11pm to continue with our Friday night. I, personally, really enjoy going down there because the other volunteers are friendly and good fun and the 'guests' are among some of the quirkiest, most down to earth people I have ever met. The great thing about it is that, because there are a variety of jobs that need doing, you are able to do whatever you feel comfortable doing, be it helping in the kitchen or being out on the floor chatting to guests. If anyone else would like to come down and see what it's like, do please chat to me. There's no pressure to commit long term, but I'm sure you'll find it's a rewarding and upbuilding experience. Every Blessing.

**Thank You***Alexander Goater*

All great organisations have an unsung hero, a person whose work is a vital cog in their day to day running and yet their work can often go unnoticed by those not entirely aware of the organisation's intricate operations. CASSOC is one such organisation; the unsung hero is Matthew French.

Matt, or Frenchie as he is affectionately known, started at the University of Bristol in 2001 and completed a Masters degree in Physics before progressing to a PhD within the Physics department. Throughout his time at Bristol Matt has been an integral member of CASSOC, as well as being the Chaplaincy Senior Resident for the past five years.



Have you ever wondered how the bar gets stocked up? Have you ever wondered who painted the bar? Have you ever wondered why CASSOC has a kitchen it can use? Have you ever wondered who sets up the tables and chairs in the bar? Have you ever wondered who finds the time to write and print the bulletin for you every week? Wonder no more, the answer is Matthew French, and he does so much more. Unselfish, hardworking and dependable, I have never heard him complain about the duties he undertakes for the good of CASSOC.

Unfortunately Matt may be leaving us at the end of this academic year to undertake a PGCE and a career in teaching. We wish him all the best and every success wherever he goes. Well, now Matt is no longer our unsung hero; merely our hero. Thank you for everything you have done.

**Presidential Goodbye***Julia Giannini*

When I was elected President of CASSOC last year, I wondered how I would take on the responsibility. Then I realised Matt French would be there to guide the whole process. So firstly, thank you to Matt! You have been an amazing help. But I would also really like to thank the committee. I didn't know many of them when we were grouped together last year, but it's been fantastic working together.

Robin – great hair, great rum punch, always willing to work hard and play harder.

Joe – a man of few (emailed) words, but with multiple hidden talents (did anyone know he played the Bongos??).

Monica – admirer of the Catholic man in a suit, ever the theatrical presence at meetings and mass.

Alastair – he may be tone deaf and have one of the loudest laughs you have ever heard, but he knows how to handle his money (just don't mention Exeter tickets).

Dom – the new recruit. He can dance, and is especially good at dancing his way out of meetings! But his enthusiasm for all things CASSOC and more is irreplaceable.

Finally, thank you to all you CASSOC members! You have made this year what it is. From cooking after mass, attending our various events, or just drinking at the bar, you have made the society thrive this year. So thanks to you all. On that note, see you in the bar...

## Roles

### President, Julia Giannini

The President is the one who oversees the goings on of the society. You conduct committee meetings, delegate jobs, are usually the main point of contact with the Union, and generally with the members of the society. And don't forget those wonderful announcements at the end of mass! Finally, it is your duty to be in the bar, behind the bar, or at the bar as often as possible.



### Vice President, Robin Eames

The role of the vice-president is not a clearly defined one. There is the obvious one of taking over the president's duties if he/she is unable to fulfil them, which generally involves doing the announcements in mass and signing the occasional cheque if they aren't around. Other than that the VP helps the other committee members with their roles and is in the bar after most masses.



### Treasurer, Alistair Russell

My job involves overseeing finances, writing cheques, taking money to the bank. A role which is vital for the smooth running of CASSOC.



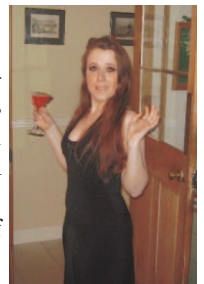
### Social Secretary, Dom DeBoo

My role as social secretary means that I have input into the social events that happen in the Chaplaincy and also take charge of ensuring that we are all fed and watered after Sunday night mass.



### Secretary, Monica Nash

As secretary of Cassoc you are involved in all committee decisions and attend meetings to take down the minutes, type them up and email them to everyone on the committee. Other than that there is a bit of washing up and plenty of fun.



### Communications, Joe Cook

I generally keep people informed as to what is going on in the society. The most frequent job is sending an email out each week. And, of course, I've had the pleasure of editing the (supposedly termly!) newsletter.



The new Committee elections will be held on the 22nd February. If you think you have what it takes and want to be part of the future of CASSOC, put yourself forward for a position!

## Music Group

A final thank you to Patricia, Frank, and all who have helped with the music for Mass over the past year. It always sounds excellent and has really uplifted the worship. Patricia, we will be looking forward to your visits next year! If you would like to contribute to the music in any way, do let us know.

### Upcoming Events:

- Next week - CASSOC Bar Crawl
- 22nd February - Elections + Rum and Pancake Night

