



## **CENTRE FOR MARIAN STUDIES**

**Registered Charity 1183579**

### **ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

The Centre for Marian Studies (the CMS), established in 1995, provides educational courses, promotes research and maintains a library, on subjects relating to the theology and wider cult of the Virgin Mary. It has no religious affiliation and is open to members of any religious tradition or none. Members of the CMS are dedicated to interdisciplinary collaboration to support and advance Marian scholarship.

The CMS was originally registered with a Trust Deed in 1997 as The Marian Study Centre (Registered Charity 1066253). In 2019 the decision was taken to register the charity as a [Charitable Incorporated Organisation, whose only voting members are its charity trustees](#). Our registration was confirmed on 24th May 2019. This annual report covers the period from 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024, as the latter is our accounting end of year date.

### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

The CMS aims to advance the education of the public in all matters related to the Virgin Mary, including any theology, devotion, and other social and cultural activities pertaining to her, in particular for the provision of a library, a picture collection, and other material resources, the undertaking of academic research and the dissemination of the useful results to the public and the provision of educational courses and lectures.

In April 2021 the CMS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with St Mary's University in Twickenham to develop mutual agreements for cooperation based on our respective academic and educational needs. St Mary's University is now the official home of the CMS, and the CMS library collection has been established in the crypt of the church on the university campus. The collection enhances the theological resources held at the university and is available to researchers in Marian Studies.

The trustees have cross-referenced these objectives and activities with the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

The CMS website, which is maintained on a voluntary basis by a member of the CMS Management Committee, provides information on Marian news and events: [www.marianstudies.ac.uk](http://www.marianstudies.ac.uk).

The trustees and members of the Management Committee of the CMS are actively engaged in Marian Studies and examples of their publications are listed on the charity's website: <https://www.marianstudies.ac.uk/publications>

In order to promote research, we have also now developed a scheme that allows people to apply to become Fellows, Members and Associates of the CMS. The full details are posted online on our website: <https://www.marianstudies.ac.uk/membership>

## **CONFERENCES AND ONLINE EVENTS**

We are pleased to be able to organise in-person conferences with a Zoom option at St Mary's University. The in-person conferences offer a preferential rate for students and attendees on reduced income.

We have also continued to offer free online events in order to give as many people as possible the opportunity to attend.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2023**

#### **On Advent Eve: The Mother of God in Art, Theology and Music**

We held a one-day conference at St Mary's University (with the option to attend via Zoom) to explore the significance of the Mother of God in images, words and music. Our guest speakers were Dr. Darrelyn Gunzburg, who teaches Cultural Astronomy and Astrology at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David; the Reverend Canon Dr. Paul Williams, who is Domestic Chaplain to HM The King and Rector of the Sandringham Group of Churches; Professor Jacob Phillips, who is Dean of the Faculty of Education, Theology, and the Arts at St Mary's University; and Professor Emeritus Fr. Richard Price, who taught the History of Christianity at Heythrop College, London. The event concluded with a performance of Marian music led by Cherry-Willow Pauls.

### **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

#### **Candlemas Lecture (via Zoom)**

Thanks to the generosity of one of the CMS trustees, we have reinstated our annual Candlemas lecture, with the event now being held in honour of the late Dr Cathy Oakes, who was an art historian and one of the founding members of our charity. Cathy was an expert in medieval Marian iconography and her untimely death in 2019 was a great loss to the CMS on both a personal and academic level. The third lecture (via Zoom) in this new series took place on 1st February 2024. The invited speaker was Professor Laura Saetveit Miles (University of Bergen, Norway), author of the highly acclaimed monograph *The Virgin Mary's Book at the Annunciation* (Boydell & Brewer, 2020). Her presentation, entitled 'Reading alongside the Virgin Mary in Late-medieval Books of Hours Annunciation Scenes,' focused on two rare and fascinating versions of the standard Annunciation scene, as they developed in both devotional literature and illuminations in Books of Hours.

#### **Online seminar series**

In October 2023 we began a monthly series of free online seminars. The aim was to give Marian researchers the opportunity to present their work in a supportive atmosphere. It proved to be an occasion for postgraduates to discuss one of their thesis questions, and for

established Marian scholars to put forward a new area of investigation. The seminars took place on Wednesday afternoons at 3pm (in the UK) via Zoom and were chaired by Professor Sarah Jane Boss.

The topics were:

“‘A phoenix from the ashes, a throne amongst the ruins’: antiquity and memory at Bartolo Longo's Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary in Pompeii’ – Dr Jessica Hughes (The Open University)

‘Three Marian Shrines in Sixteenth Century England’ – Tim Guile (Chair of the English Catholic History Association)

‘Women at the centre: A Feminist Art-Theological exploration of women in Reformation period Christian art’ – Ninnaku Oberhozler (King’s College London)

‘A Voice of Her Own: Embodiment Theology in Conversation with Protestant Mariology’ – Major Emma Moore (Eva Burrows College, The Salvation Army Australia Territory. Ph.D. Candidate, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia)

‘Mary as *Pontifex* and the Marian Dogmas: a relationship centred interpretation’ – Fiona Li (Regis College at the University of Toronto, Canada)

‘The Virgin Mary in Ethiopia: Marian Veneration, Africanity, and the Female Element’ – Cressida Marcus (The Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford)

‘Pierced: Comparing the Mystical Hearts of Mary and Teresa of Avila’ – Barbara Bradley (University of Edinburgh)

‘The Apocalyptic Mary: the Labour of Creation and the End of the World’ – Reverend Professor Steven Shakespeare (Professor of Continental Philosophy of Religion at Liverpool Hope University)

As the seminars were so successful, we are going to run a second series in 2024-25.

## **ONLINE JOURNAL**

In 2021 the CMS relaunched *Maria: A Journal of Marian Studies* as a peer reviewed, online and open access journal. We have joined the mEDRA scheme to register the journal content for the Digital Object Identifier System.

During the period covered by this report, the CMS published two issues of the journal. Issue 3.2 (November 2023) contained an article on the subject of medieval depictions of the crucifixion on a Madonna lily; an argument for the dogmatic definition of Mary as Co-redemptrix; a paper that sheds new light on the Marian visions of Julian of Norwich; and a theological reflection on the significance of Elizabeth Kindelmann’s writing on devotion to Mary’s Immaculate Heart. It also included the translation of an extract from a work by Jean-

Jacques Olier; and a review of Amy Peeler's recent monograph entitled *Women and the Gender of God*.

Issue 4.1 (May 2024) was a special publication dedicated to the inspiring Marian research that was addressed by five of the speakers at our online conference entitled *More Universal than Catholicism? Mary among Asian Religions*, which we co-organised with the Initiative for the Study of Asian Catholics (ISAC) in May 2023. The articles focused on 'Universal Belief and Local Apparition: Holy Mary and Inculturation in Taiwan'; 'Devotion and Miracles in the late Seventeenth-Century Spanish Philippines'; 'Regulating *Marialis Cultus* in Macau'; 'The Virgin Mary with the Face of Gwan-eum: Theological Reflection on Korean sculptor Choi Jong-tae's Artworks'; and 'Three Faces of Mary in the Vietnamese Diaspora'.

The journal contributes to our commitment to publish innovative Marian research in the fields of theology, philosophy, literature, history, visual culture, music, sociology, anthropology and psychology. We warmly welcome original contributions on Marian topics in the form of refereed articles, discussion pieces, translations and book reviews.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Centre for Marian Studies: Accounts 2023-24

Year End: 31 August 2024

	Income	Outgoings
<b>Balance at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023</b>	<b>3244.73</b>	
December conference	563.90	466.82*
		(*Registering speakers 180.00, travel for speakers 63.58, accommodation for speakers 98.24, restaurant meal 125.00)
Candlemas lecture honorarium		100.00
Fellowship fees (7 fellows)	354.35	
Membership fees (11 members)	273.50	
Associate fees (2 associates)	20.00	
Website		183.60
mEDRA journal DOIs		195.44
Donation (from <i>Origins of the Cult of the Virgin Mary</i> )	50.69	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1262.44</b>	<b>945.86</b>
Net outgoing	316.58	

<b>Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024</b>	<b>3561.31</b>	
(Ringfenced for Candlemas lectures 200.00, gives disposable funds of:	3361.31	

The accounts for 2023-24 are not complicated and our internal review process is sufficient.

We received £638.85 made up of fees from Fellows and Members. Other income came from our December 2023 conference (£563.90); and a kind donation of royalties (£50.69) from the sale of a book entitled *Origins of the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Burns & Oates, 2008), edited by Dr Chris Maunder, who is one of our Foundation Fellows.

Our outgoings were £945.86, which include the honorarium of £100 to our speaker for the Candlemas lecture; and £466.82 to cover the expenses of our four guest speakers at our in-person conference in December 2023. We make an annual payment to mEDRA for the DOIs for our online journal (£195.44 in 2024); and we paid £183.60 for the maintenance of the WIX website and the renewal of our domain name.

At present, the funds are unrestricted, i.e. not earmarked for specific purposes. The funds held by the CMS are also too small for the holding of reserves.

We have concluded that the CMS has the funds and resources for it to be an ongoing concern for 2024-25. If fundraising is successful in the future, it will be necessary to undergo external financial monitoring.

## **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The CMS is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and has used the Charity Commission's template for its governing document.

All trustees must be aged over 16 years and at least one of the trustees of the Centre for Marian Studies must be 18 years of age or over. The maximum number of charity trustees is twelve and the minimum number is three. If the number falls below the minimum, the remaining trustee or trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees or appoint a new charity trustee. The quorum for a trustees' meeting is two. Apart from the first charity

trustees, every trustee must be appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment as charity trustees, the charity trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Centre for Marian Studies.

### **Management of the charity**

The Centre for Marian Studies is currently run by six trustees and four members of the Management Committee, all of whom contribute to the aims of the charity on a voluntary basis.

#### **Trustees**

Sr Dr Cathy Jones (co-editor of our journal)  
Dr Melanie Landman  
Professor Andrew Louth  
Dr Catherine O'Brien (Chair of Trustees)  
Mr Mike Russell  
Reverend Canon Dr Paul Williams

#### **Members of the Management Committee**

Professor Sarah Jane Boss (Secretary, librarian and co-editor of our journal)  
Dr Chris Maunder (Treasurer)  
Mrs Natalie Maunder (Website coordinator)  
Professor Jacob Phillips (Conference organiser)

The full committee meets twice a year, usually in September and March.

### **Reference and administrative details**

The Centre for Marian Studies

Registered Charity 1183579

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