

Mater Ecclesiae College

**Charity Trustees' Annual Report and
Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2024**

Registered Charity No: 1186431

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Mater Ecclesiae College

Charity Trustees' Annual Report for the year ending 31 July 2024

Charity Trustees

The charity trustees are pleased to present the report of Mater Ecclesiae College (referenced later as the CIO) which was registered as charity number 1186431 on 19 November 2019. The registered office is at St Mary's University, Waldegrave Road, Twickenham, TW1 4SX.

The CIO was formed to advance the Catholic religion for the benefit of the public, by:

- a) Conducting the Ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology and Philosophy founded by the English Province of the Society of Jesus (The Jesuits) in Leuven in 1614 and transferred from Heythrop College to St Mary's University on 17 July 2019;
- b) Conducting any other ecclesiastical faculties that may be erected in addition to the ecclesiastical faculties mentioned in (a) above, whether as an ecclesiastical university or otherwise;
- c) Providing such other education and formation as is incidental to the objects set out in (a) and (b) above.

The Charity Trustees for the whole of the year were as follows:

The Most Revd Bernard Longley
The Right Revd Professor Charles Roderick Strange
The Revd Professor Simon George Gaine OP
The Right Revd John Francis Sherrington
The Most Revd Mark Anthony O'Toole
Professor Gavin Gregory D'Costa
The Most Revd Malcolm Patrick McMahon OP
The Most Revd John Wilson

Governance and Management

The governing document of the charity is the Mater Ecclesiae College Constitution adopted by the charity trustees in August 2019, which became recognised by the Charity Commission when the Charitable Incorporated Organisation was registered on 19 November 2019. The Charity Trustees are the Governing Body of the Ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology and Philosophy conducted by the CIO under the canonical Statutes of the Faculties made by the Governing Body and approved by the Holy See.

Under the Statutes made by the Governing Body, operational details are delegated to the College's Operational Board, which meets 3 times each academic year.

The Charity Trustees work entirely on a voluntary basis.

Explanation of the Work of the CIO

Mater Ecclesiae College, the Pontifical Athenaeum based at St Mary's University, Twickenham, opened at St Mary's in autumn 2019. Mater Ecclesiae College is the latest civil incarnation of the Ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology and Philosophy founded by the English Province of the Society of Jesus (The Jesuits) in Leuven in 1614. Known most recently as the Bellarmine Institute, it had been a part of Heythrop College, a chartered college within the University of London. The Jesuits' decision to close Heythrop as a College of the University of London was finalised in 2018, when students who had been studying for civil degrees there completed their courses.

With the closure of Heythrop College, it became urgent to re-locate the Ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology and Philosophy to St Mary's University as Mater Ecclesiae College, in order to continue the intellectual formation of the students at Allen Hall, the seminary of the Archdiocese of Westminster.

Activities

The main activities of the CIO are:

Firstly, to provide opportunities for the study, teaching, and research of Theology and Philosophy in a way that promotes a more profound knowledge and understanding of Christian revelation, and of those matters connected with it; to enunciate systematically the truths contained therein; to consider in the light of revelation the most recent progress of the sciences and to present them effectively to the people of today.

Secondly, to provide students with an education in Catholic doctrine in the first, second, and third cycles (baccalaureate, licence and doctorate); to prepare them to carry out their future tasks effectively and to provide for the continuing education of the ministers of the Church.

Thirdly, to collaborate closely in the work of evangelisation with the hierarchy and with the local and universal Church.

Fourthly, to establish fruitful collaboration with other Ecclesiastical faculties and with non-Ecclesiastical faculties and centres of Theology and Philosophy.

Under the arrangements with St Mary's University, Twickenham, students will typically study a civil Bachelor's Degree in Theology ('BA (Hons) in Theological Studies') awarded by St Mary's, and also a *Sacrae Theologiae Baccalaureus* or Baccalaureate of Sacred Theology ('STB') which is awarded by Mater Ecclesiae College.

Mater Ecclesiae College as such is now into the sixth year of its existence. All courses have been delivered and attendance has been high.

Achievements and Performance

For the academic year 2023-24, the College had twenty-five students. These students came from the dioceses of Westminster, Southwark, and Cardiff, East Anglia, Arundel and Brighton, and Plymouth; there were also Salesians, Oratorians and the Institute of Christ the King, Sovereign Priest, as well as members of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham

Financial Review

Whilst Mater Ecclesiae College is an independent institution, it has a collaboration arrangement with St Mary's University, Twickenham. Under this arrangement, the teaching is arranged by St Mary's and much teaching takes place on the premises of St Mary's University.

A Service Arrangement exists between the CIO and St Mary's, and there is a charge of £50,000 plus VAT per annum to the CIO, for the University's provision of the following services:

- Registration & Admissions
- Student services (including wellbeing)
- Arranging and paying Hourly Paid Academics to teach the ecclesiastical modules for the STB
- Marketing, Recruitment and Communication of programmes
- Human Resources support
- IT support & Library services
- Financial administration support

The College's students are permitted to have access to library facilities at Allen Hall Seminary.

The charges are reviewed on an annual basis and may be increased to reflect the scale of costs, activity levels and inflation.

Management and transactional accounting for the CIO is carried out by St Mary's Finance Department. The charity trustees are grateful to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales for providing funding for the above costs.

In the preceding financial reporting period, the College changed its financial year-end (or Accounting Reference Date) from 31 December to 31 July, in order to better align with the academic year-end. The timing of the College's annual donation from the Bishop's Conference of England & Wales and the annual payment of its service charge to St Mary's University for the year ended 31 July 2023 fell outside of the accounting period ended 31 July 2023. Accordingly, the College is therefore reporting net receipts and payments during the current year for both the prior period and the current year ended 31 July 2024.

The College did not have its own bank account during this period, and it had no assets nor liabilities as at the period end.

Reserves policy

The CIO is in the early years of its formation, with its activities being funded by a donation from Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, received via the Catholic Trust for England and Wales. The trustees will develop a meaningful reserves policy in the next few years.

Plans for Future Years

Two primary areas of development are underway; firstly, with regard to Canon Law and secondly, with regard to the establishment of a Licence in Sacred Theology (STL) programme. A PGCert in Canon Law and Safeguarding was prepared with the hope that a cohort would be ready in September. The requirements of the National Tribunal Service have since modified slightly however, and St Mary's and Mater Ecclesiae await further guidance as to subsequent programme development. Plans for the development of the STL are underway and this will be developed from the MA Theology programme in the first instance, and, it is hoped, will be launched in 2025 to enable sufficient time to advertise and recruit a viable cohort.

The establishment of the CertHE Philosophy programme is intended to enable (a) lay students to take the full programme of studies necessary for them to be eligible for the STB and (b) ensure that seminarians receive civil accreditation for their Philosophy studies. Interest in the BA (Hons) Theological Studies with CertHE Philosophy has been encouraging, and the launch of this programme represents a significant expansion of College's work.

Graduation

The 2024 graduation ceremony took place on 10th September 2024, at which 14 members of the College graduated as Bachelors of Sacred Theology, nine *summa cum laude* (with the greatest distinction) and five *magna cum laude* (with great distinction), and several new lecturers made their profession of faith and made their oath of fidelity in the presence of the Chancellor.

Declaration

The charity trustees declare that they approved the report and accounts for the Year ended 31 July 2024 on 5th March 2025.

Signed:

Archbishop John Sherrington, Chairman of the Governing Body on behalf of the Charity Trustees

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Mater Ecclesiae College

I report to the trustees of the Mater Ecclesiae College ('the Charity') on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 July 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with my examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- ♦ accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- ♦ the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Peter Mackereth, Independent Examiner
(Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales)
Buzzacott Audit LLP
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

30 May 2025

Mater Ecclesiae College
Receipts and Payments Account for the Year ending 31 July 2024

	Notes	Total funds* Year ended Jul 2024 £	Total funds* 7 months to Jul 2023 £
Receipts	1		
Donations		120,000	-
Sub Total (Gross income for Annual Return)		120,000	-
Asset and investment sales		-	-
Total Receipts		120,000	-
Payments	2		
Service charge paid		120,000	-
Sub total (Gross expenditure for Annual Return)		120,000	-
Asset and investment purchases		-	-
Total Payments		120,000	-
Net receipts/(payments)		-	-
Transfers between funds		-	-
Cash funds last period end		-	-
Cash funds this period end		-	-

*All funds are unrestricted

Statement of Assets & Liabilities at 31 July 2024

	Total Funds* July 2024 £	Total Funds* July 2023 £
Total Cash funds	—	—
Other monetary assets	—	—
Investment assets	—	—
Total Assets	—	—
Liabilities	—	—
Total Net Assets	—	—
Total Reserves	—	—

*There are neither Assets nor Liabilities as at the year end

Signed on behalf of all the trustees

Archbishop John Sherrington
Trustee

Date: 29 May 2025

Statement of Accounting Policies

A. Basis of preparation

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis as permitted under section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Charities Act').

B. Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are general funds that are available for use at the charity trustees' discretion in furtherance of any of the objectives of the charity.

Notes to the Accounts 31 July 2024

	Total funds Year to July 24 £	Total funds 7 months to July 23 £
1 Receipts		
Donations – Catholic Trust for England and Wales - Contribution towards running costs	120,000	-
Total	120,000	-

	£	£
2 Payments		
Service charge to St Mary's University	120,000	-
Total	120,000	-

3 Related party transactions

The Most Revd Bernard Longley The Most Revd Malcolm McMahon OP and The Most Reverend Mark O'Toole, are all trustees of the CIO and also trustees of the Catholic Trust for England and Wales, a charity that donated £120,000 in the year to July 2024 to the CIO as contribution towards its running costs and is expected to continue supporting the work of Mater Ecclesiae College.

There were no other related party transactions.