



the Company of Servers

Membership Report to the Annual General Meeting

Saturday 30 April 2011

I am delighted to report to this meeting that the Company of Servers has continued to expand and flourish in the past 12 months. Local Chapters now represent the areas of Bath and Wells, York, Ripon and Leeds, S Albans, Southwark, Norwich, Exeter, London and Salisbury. 5 of these Chapters have been founded since the last Annual General Meeting. During the next few months there are to be inaugural meetings in the areas of Chelmsford, Worcester, Chichester and Blackburn and Liverpool. We are still pursuing interested servers and clergy in the Manchester area and have very recently begun discussions and planning with those in the Birmingham area. Clearly, this is an incredible achievement by all concerned and not least of all those at the core of each Chapter, both ordained and lay, who have worked to bring Chapters to their current point. Using the most recent information returned by Chapter committees I can report that the number of Companions is now approximately 230 with an additional 30 Associate Companions. This is an increase of more than 100% since the last AGM and with the planned Foundations this Summer I hope to be able to report a further substantial increase to this meeting next year.

I feel bound to make mention of the London Chapter, formed earlier this year, which covers 5 Episcopal areas and for the Salisbury Chapter which, within a month of its Foundation had accrued around 40 Companions. The Ripon and Leeds Chapter, also, continues to flourish and it is very good, today, to put names to faces!

During the past 12 months the Central Committee has responded to feedback from Companions, and especially from local committee members, to streamline and simplify the means by which information is passed from local to central levels. Greater use of email has been successful and the Company website continues to be the main point of reference for all members as well as the public seeking information. Local committees are now required to make a 'return' to the Central Committee following a meeting or event at which new Companions are admitted instead of the quarterly returns previously requested. Although this has been successful overall please can I stress the importance of keeping this efficient and keeping communication open? With the increasing use of electronic communication it is also essential that local committees keep us up to date with changes of contact details and, indeed with changes of committee personnel. For the Company to continue to maintain itself as a reputable organisation, and one in which its aims and objectives are clear, we must all strive to offer the best we can, not only in our ministry at the Altar but also in how we conduct ourselves at meetings, public events and in the development of our membership. Our Communications Officer, Mark Charlton, would be delighted to receive more up to date information and photographs from Chapters of events to come and news of events passed. There must be a shared responsibility, as we share our ministry, to support the work begun by others in order to fulfil our mission of being worshippers, evangelists and developing our understanding of what it means to be a part of an inclusive catholic organisation.