

New President for the Australian Catholic Historical Society

At its annual general meeting on 19th May 2024 the Australian Catholic Historical Society elected Sydney priest, Fr Brian Lucas as its new president.

Father Lucas takes over from Dr John Carmody who for over a decade has carefully guided the Society in its work in promoting scholarship in various aspects of the history of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Fr Lucas is currently the national director of Catholic Mission and prior appointments include general secretary of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Archdiocesan Secretary in Sydney.

“The approach from some of the members for me to make myself available as president came as somewhat of a surprise, but I am delighted to take up this challenge and particularly privileged to continue the good work of Dr John Carmody who has guided the Society over more than a decade. The activities of the Society are particularly important in ensuring we maintain the memory of our past and preserve our heritage for future generations,” Fr Lucas said.

The Society was founded in 1940 in Sydney, by a group of students of Australian Catholic history led by Fr (later Archbishop) Eris O'Brien and Sydney solicitor Brian McGrath. It was revived in the 1960s through the efforts of Monsignor Cornelius (Con) Duffy. It publishes a scholarly journal twice a year.

Membership of the society is open to anyone interested in Catholic Church history. It meets generally on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM in the crypt of Saint Patrick's Church Hill with a guest presenter, questions and discussion, and afternoon tea. Everyone is welcome to attend as a guest and there is no charge.

The next event on 16 June is “Sevenhill – a living archive” by Dr Julie Thorpe independent scholar and historian. Sevenhill is the Jesuit Winery in the Clare Valley.

Details of the year's programme as well as resources on church history are on the website <https://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/> Enquiries may be directed to secretaryachs@gmail.com

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