



## An Invitation to Manchester 15 - 18 May 2008

*"Trailing the Conference Brochure in next month's Catena"*

by Peter Rand, Kenilworth Circle, Conference Hotels Advisor

**T**he Brothers of Provinces 1 and 17 are planning a spectacular Centenary Conference next year. Just one month to go until you will be able to register to attend the Conference, book your functions and make your hotel arrangements. Here is a flavour of what is in store.

### Manchester Circle Celebrations

On Thursday at 6.00pm at Salford Cathedral, the Manchester Circle Centenary Mass of Thanksgiving will be celebrated by the Rt Rev Terence Brain, Bishop of Salford. This will be followed by the Manchester Circle Centenary Dinner at the Midland. On Friday the Circle hold their Centenary Meeting at the Palace Hotel at 3.00pm. There is a nominal charge of £5 per Brother to offset the refreshments and other costs directly associated with this special Centenary Meeting.

### Civic Receptions

With no suitable City Centre facility available in Manchester to hold the anticipated numbers attending this Centenary Conference, the Civic Reception will be split between the Midland Hotel and the Manchester Town Hall, across St Peter's Square. The Lord Mayor will welcome everyone at the Midland at 8.45pm to be followed by 25 minutes of a traditional Manchester welcome. The Lord Mayor will then go to the Town Hall where the entertainment will precede his welcome there at 9.15pm. There will be limited seating at each location with sufficient for those whose lack of mobility may require it. Tickets will be allocated to either the Midland Hotel or the Town Hall by Province in late March.

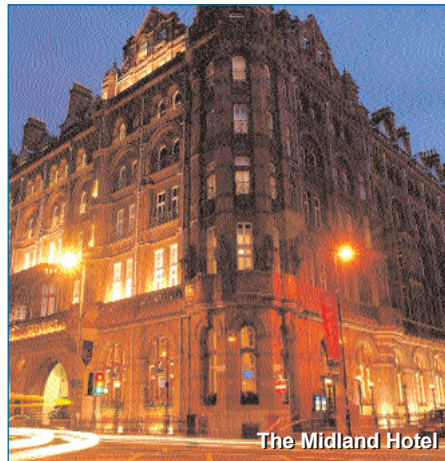
### Saturday Evening Functions

The Centenary Conference Banquet will take place at the Midland Hotel at 6.00pm for 7.00pm. In order to accommodate in comfort the anticipated numbers, there will be no dancing but Grand President elect, David Taylor, will be joined on the Toast List with His Eminence Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor and well known after dinner speaker, ex Trappist Monk, ex parachutist and raconteur, Peter Maloney. Book early to guarantee your place.

### Centenary Carnival Dinner and Dance

This traditional "Carnival Affair" will take place at the Palace Hotel at 6.30pm for 7.30pm. There is a permanent stage for the 8-piece Chris Mawdsley Show Band,

part of the Northern Jazz Orchestra. Dancing until 12.00am and beyond in the Grand Ballroom. An ideal function if you are staying at the Palace.



The Midland Hotel

### "Manchester Centenary Experience" Dinner and Dance

Where else to hold this memorable evening, but in the main banqueting suite at Manchester United FC. A special fully inclusive evening has been arranged, starting with pre dinner drinks, commencing between 6.15pm and 6.45pm, as you wander through the Museum of Manchester United FC. Guides are available to explain the enormous array of memorabilia. Turn the clock back and view price lists, trophies and items such as the KSG uniform of Sir Matt Busby. There will even be an opportunity for a quick "stadium look-in" before dinner at 8.00pm where a half bottle of wine per person and mineral water is included in the price, before dancing until midnight to the big band sound of Mark Gilbanks.

### Hotel Accommodation

There are dozens of hotels in the centre of Manchester. I have personally inspected over 20 in order to select the nine which are considered most appropriate in terms of quality, location, car parking arrangements, the general environment and cost. They range from the 5 star Radisson Edwardian Hotel at a cost per person for the weekend of £190 to the excellent Premier Inn GMEX (previously Premier Travel Inn) at £90 per person for the weekend in twin/double occupancy. Premier Inn is the designated family hotel for the Conference with two children under 16 years staying free in their parent's accommodation and enjoying a free full buffet breakfast each morning.

Both the Radisson Edwardian and the Premier Inn are within 150 yards of the front entrance of the Midland, and no more than three minutes walk from Bridgewater Hall and the Town Hall.

Jury's Inn is next door to Bridgewater Hall and the Hilton Hotel, Manchester's most iconic building, is just five minutes walk away.

The other three star hotels are all within a few minutes walk, as are the 4 star Palace and the brand new City Inn.

### Car Parking

All City Centres these days are charging for car parking and the going rate in Manchester is £15.50 per 24 hours. However, discounts have been negotiated at all but one of the hotels. Details are in the Conference Brochure. Be careful which car parks offer the discounts. (More details in the Conference Brochure.) They vary from one hotel to another.

### Conference Fee

There are costs of around £50,000 in running the Conference, which are allocated to those brothers and ladies who attend. This includes costs of £21,000 directly relating to the Saturday dinners and Sunday farewell lunch, other than food costs, plus £29,000 covering the Friday evening reception/transport, some printing costs and refreshments on Saturday and Sunday morning. This expenditure is recovered through a combination of the Conference fee of £18 per person and the ticket prices of the functions.

There are further costs in excess of £50,000, which are partially offset by sponsorship of £21,000 secured for Manchester, leaving a normal budgeted deficit for the Annual Conference, similar to Cardiff, of a little under £29,000. This is funded each year, by the total membership, through the Capitation Fee and shown in the Accounts. This covers Grand Council Meeting expenses, all costs of guests, most of the costs associated with the Sunday Mass, all of the costs of the Saturday morning conference and the marketing of the weekend.

The Manchester Provinces 1 and 17 look forward to welcoming you to the City for the Centenary Conference and Social Weekend in May 2008.

*The Conference Brochure and Booking Forms will be in the November issue of Catena.*