

Editors' Note

When the Society for Confraternity Studies was founded in 1989, it immediately decided to start a newsletter to keep members informed of current scholarship on medieval and early modern confraternities and on the activities of its membership. In the past five years (1990-95), the society's newsletter, *Confraternitas*, has grown into a biannual publication that includes not only news, notes, and a bibliography of recent publications received, but also brief articles of high scholarly interest. It is now time to review the past, examine the current situation and determine how we can continue to provide our community of scholars with a service that will continue to fulfil our needs.

Our opinion, confirmed by comments we have received from many of our readers in the past five years, is that *Confraternitas* has, indeed, offered a valuable service to the community and should aim to continue to do so. The short articles, news, notes, and bibliography of recent publications by members and friends have kept us in touch with each other and with current interests in our field(s) of study. *Confraternitas* has also been a publication that, in spite of the current economic climate, has managed to become established, grow, and enter into many university libraries.

As we start our second "five-year plan," we have therefore decided to introduce some small changes that, we hope, will further consolidate our work. With volume 6 (1995), *Confraternitas* will include more articles, some of which will be longer than those we have been able to accommodate in the past. We will also include "research tools". In the Fall 1995 issue, for example, we will publish a catalogue of the confraternities *fondo* at the Archiepiscopal Archive in Florence. This is a particularly valuable collection of manuscript documents that, until recently, have not been available for consultation, let alone cataloguing. We are thankful to its archivist, prof. don Gilberto Aranci, not only for compiling the catalogue but also for agreeing to publish it in *Confraternitas*.

Confraternitas will also change its appearance. It will be professionally typeset and will come in a more attractive cover. It will be published by, and distributed through, the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies (Toronto). Since the 1989 conference on "Ritual and Recreation in Renaissance Confraternities" gave birth to our Society and newsletter, the CRRS has been extremely generous, offering technical support, a proper university home for the offprints and publications we received,

and financial assistance with a variety of costs incurred in the publication process (helpers, paper, envelopes, postage, etc.). *Confraternitas* will thus acquire a “professional” look and organization that, we hope, will inspire confidence and attract subscriptions from more university libraries.

We hope our changes will be seen as improvements that make a good product even better. We invite you to continue to send your notes, news, articles, offprints and books to us. We urge you to recommend *Confraternitas* to your colleagues and, above all, to your library.

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