Acknowledgements and author’s note

As this book is a sustained enquiry into the ‘household of faith’ surrounding and supporting English Catholics in the latter part of the twentieth century, so too has its evolution and completion been attributable to a congruent ‘family of faith’ who have encouraged and sustained the author throughout its production. It is a great pleasure to acknowledge the many people who have supported this research over the years, and have helped me to keep body, mind and spirit together throughout the process.

Since it began its life as an Oxford doctoral thesis, a primary debt of gratitude for this final product is owed to my former supervisor, and now mentor, friend and research collaborator, Jane Garnett. Her unfailing help and intellectual encouragement have sustained me through the various phases of the research process, and I am delighted to pass on here grateful and affectionate thanks.

Financial and institutional support to undertake the project was initially provided by a Newman College Archbishop Mannix Travelling Scholarship and the University of Melbourne Rae and Edith Bennett Travelling Scholarship. Appointments as a Sub-Dean and Senior Scholar at Wadham College, and then as the Hardie Fellow at Lincoln College, aided the completion process and the transition to a monograph. A period of sabbatical leave from my current Fellowship at Lincoln, and the collegial support of my colleagues there, including Susan Brigden and Perry Gauci, has greatly helped with the final stages of the writing process.

Appreciative thanks go to the archivists and librarians, particularly in the Upper Reading Room of the Bodleian library, who have enabled access to the source materials and archival collections utilised throughout this research. I am especially grateful to Father David Lannon for his hospitality and good cheer on my archival visits to Burnley, and for expert assistance from Meg Whittle at Liverpool and other archivist staff at Birmingham, Westminster, Farm Street and the Catholic Truth Society.
Particular thanks are owed to Father Simon Firth and (the late) Canon Joseph Carter who allowed me to undertake research within their parishes. To the men and women who spoke to me on these trips to Trafford Park and Crumpsall, I pass on my heartfelt thanks for their generosity and trust in sharing with me their life stories and their faith.

Research and writing can be a solitary exercise, made palatable by the camaraderie and conviviality of fellow travellers and surrogate family. For their intellectual companionship and congenial diversions in Oxford, many thanks go to Mark Abrahamson, Nazneen Ahmed, Anne Bush, Elin Hellum, Christian Lübbe, Marcia Dixon (up north), Frances Flanagan, Matthew Grimley, Max and Hannah Skoda and Rafal Stepień. Support from antipodean outposts came from Danielle Conroy, Andy Hamilton SJ, Katharine Massam, Tom Moloney, Josie Vains, Virginia Wise, and the Harris family. It is a source of sadness that my mother did not live to see this book come to fruition, but her influence permeates its pages, and I dedicate it to her. In recent times, the Folkards in Norfolk have provided a haven when much needed, and have wholeheartedly welcomed me into their family, for which I am so very grateful.

Finally, to my darling husband Tim, who has walked this journey with me (over difficult terrain) and proofread so valiantly. Without his faith, love and support, none of this would have been possible.

Author’s note

The oral history interviews undertaken were recorded in MP3 format, fully transcribed and the minutes and seconds that elapsed within the interviews quoted are referenced. Fuller details are given in the Appendix.