## The Catholic Experience: Warwickshire and Beyond

Dr Lucy Underwood, of Warwick University, gave the first talk of 2019 on 19 February. Her talk dealt with early modern recusant families, chiefly focusing on life for children and young people. Especially in the later 16th century, restrictions increased on Catholic worship and penalties became more severe. Few had the dramatic experiences of the Vaux family at Baddesley Clinton in 1591, when the ‘pursuivants’ or priest-hunters hammered on the door. Even the children had to help distract them while the five priests in the house hid themselves in a sewer under the kitchen. In 1625 an illegal school, headed by a Jesuit, was discovered at Willenhall, near Wolverhampton. The authorities removed seven boys, most children of ‘people of quality’, and placed them with foster families. An important document source for current research is a collection of records that have found at the English College in Rome. These give details of 595 individuals studying there between 1598 and 1685, many (but not all) being ordained and some returning to England. Dr Underwood highlighted some of their experiences.