

The Irish Catholic

A saint for our times John Henry Newman

Including a special supplement in collaboration with



Pages 10-34

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Govt caves in to pressure over Canonisation 'no show'

Chai Brady

Following intense pressure from *The Irish Catholic* newspaper and lobbying from diplomatic and political circles the Irish Government late Tuesday belatedly announced it will send the Minister for Education to Rome for the canonisation of Cardinal Newman on Sunday.

Pressure was building on the Government after it emerged that Prince Charles and a dozen MPs will be in Rome for the canonisation but there were no plans for the Irish Government to be represented. It is believed that there was significant disbelief in diplomatic circles about the Government's planned absence. Minister Joe McHugh will now represent the Government in Rome.

Among those piling on the pressure formally and informally was former Taoiseach John Bruton who said "I think the Government should be represented, so should UCD. My understanding is that the university founded by John

Henry Newman evolved into UCD, and this was sort of underlined by the passage of the National University of Ireland legislation in 1908," he told this paper.

Intellect

Baroness Nuala O'Loan added that it is "sad to see the Irish Government and UCD ignore the great contribution of a man of intellect, courage, and above all faith, at this time".

She said UCD is a "tremendous gift" to the people of Ireland and Newman is "surely worth recognition and appreciation, as one of Ireland's adopted sons is recognised across the world".

Senator Ronan Mullen said that the Government's failure to honour Newman "points to a very sad forgetfulness on the side of official Ireland, institutional Ireland".

He added: "Newman is a very significant part of Irish history and at a time when Ireland was emerging from the shadows of colonialism, at a time when the people of the

» Continued on Page 2

Five reasons to smile



Tara Musthy, Tia Byrne, Kate Heron, Emma Duffy and Victoria Aliphon, transition year students of St Mary's Secondary School in Baldoyle, Co. Dublin, receive their Junior Cert results. Photo: John Moore

DAVID QUINN

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MARY KENNY

The Spanish woman who is Ireland's top Newman expert

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FR BILL DAILEY

Newman: A model of Faith, a model of reason

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Time to re-discover John Henry Newman's vision of education

One of the great weaknesses of contemporary debates in Ireland is that few of them penetrate beneath the surface. Too often discussions rest solidly on ideology rather than a shared search for understanding.

Take education, as an example. It is increasingly obvious that the thrust of policy in this area is to ensure that schools and colleges are equipped to provide Google, Facebook and other technology giants with productive units for future employment. There is little room for a more holistic approach to education where the service of the human person is at the centre.

The prioritisation of the so-called STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) leaves little room for deeper reflection and often leads to a vision that is both reductive and utilitarian.

Opposition

Cardinal John Henry Newman – who will be canonised in Rome at the weekend – stood in firm opposition to such tendencies in education.

As Pope Benedict XVI reflected in his homily for the beatification of Newman in 2010, "his insights into the relationship between faith and reason, into the vital place of revealed religion in civilised society, and into the need for a broadly-based and wide-ranging approach to education were not only of profound importance for Victorian England, but continue today to inspire and enlighten many all over the world".

Benedict went on to praise Newman's vision "which has done so much to shape the ethos that is the driving force behind Catholic schools and colleges today".

Almost 130 years after Newman's death, we are still grappling with the idea of ethos in our schools and other religious institutions. Many people, I think, would be hard-pressed to define what the distinctive ethos of a Catholic school is. Answers, I suspect, would look at things like prayer at the beginning of the day, preparation for the sacraments and school Masses. All of these things are important, but without a deeply Catholic spirit permeating every aspect of the school day they run the risk of being little more than lip service.

Catholic schools are embracing of all – they should be (and are) places where children raised in all religious traditions and none feel welcome and can achieve their potential.

Editor's Comment Michael Kelly



The holistic vision of Catholic education also sees the school as a place where people from different backgrounds, ways of life, circumstances and ability gel together. Academic achievement is vitally important, but not as an end in and of itself.

“We are still grappling with the idea of ethos in our schools and other religious institutions”

A more rounded vision sees education not as merely preparing students for work, but as preparing

them for life. Values like honesty, commitment, self-sacrifice, and compassion are not often seen in the markets, but they should be hallmarks of anyone who has attended a Catholic school and values that those educated in Catholic schools bring to their work. Catholic schools have made an enormous contribution to Irish society both north and south, they will continue to do so and should be proud of their place. At the same time, they must be prepared to stand out from the crowd and insist that education is not about productive units, but the development of the human person made in God's image and likeness.

Topics like the ethos of Catholic schools will be explored in the forthcoming national conference organised by *The Irish Catholic* 'Can we keep Faith in Catholic schools in a secular society?' at the Clayton Hotel, Ballsbridge, Dublin on Thursday, October 24. Speakers include Bishop Tom Deenihan, Prof. Francis Campbell, Paul Barber, Bairbre Cahill and Natalie Finnegan. See www.irishcatholic.com or call 01 687 4028.

Govt bows to pressure to send representative to Rome

» Continued from Page 1 majority faith in Ireland had emerged as players in political and cultural life – we only had Catholic emancipation in 1829 – Newman is part of all that story.”

Hundreds of pilgrims and at least four bishops from across Ireland will stream to the Vatican this Sunday for the celebration.

The Archbishop of Dublin will not be present at the ceremony.

Historian and former UCD student Fr Anthony Gaughan told *The Irish Catholic* it is “very disappointing” the university had not announced there would be official attendance as Newman “means so much to UCD”.

What do you think?



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'Pray for peace' in Hong Kong as violence worsens – Irish missionary

Chai Brady

An Irish priest based in embattled Hong Kong has called on people to "pray for peace" as months of protests have become increasingly violent.

He said that a recent ban on face masks, which caused further clashes over the weekend, has "hardened the position of protestors".

Fr Michael Cuddigan SSC said he couldn't celebrate Mass on Sunday for the first time since the protests started almost 18 weeks ago.

"It's hard to know what's going to happen, there's a hardening of positions on both sides, the powers that be really haven't given anything," he said.

"The people in Hong Kong want to be able to choose and to elect their own officials. The powers that be, they choose who's going to be on the panel and tell the local people to choose from there."

The priest, who is originally from Midleton in Cork but has spent seven years in Hong Kong and serves at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel in Central, Hong Kong,

added: "Peace, pray for peace, that's what we need basically. Yesterday our centre was closed because the railway system was closed down, I think there's fear around."

The situation continues to escalate after a Chinese military garrison in Hong Kong raised a warning flag in a rare public reaction after taunts from protestors on Sunday.

Emergency powers

The anti-mask laws were brought in by the administration's Chief Executive Carrie Lam under colonial-era emergency powers aimed

at stopping people covering their faces during public assemblies. Ms Lam said the 'Prohibition of Face Covering Regulation' was a "necessary decision" but does not mean Hong Kong is in a state of emergency.

Fr Cuddigan's Mass had to be cancelled because the city's major transport network MTR suspended all of its operations after demonstrators vandalised several areas in the city, including train stations, shopping centres and banks.

Last week an 18-year-old student became the first

person to be shot with live ammunition by riot police after four months of protests, he survived.

Criticism

The protests first began when the Hong Kong government proposed a bill that would have extended the number of territories prisoners could be extradited to, including mainland China. It received international and domestic criticism from groups fearing the erosion of Hong Kong's legal system and unfair trials on the mainland.

Pro-life film runs for second week – despite protests

Chai Brady

A pro-life group has dubbed a demonstration outside a Galway cinema "bizarre and intolerant" after over a dozen people protested the screening of a film, which has been extended to run for a second week.

The protestors gathered outside Omniplex in Salthill on Friday of last week, in what is believed to be one in a series of planned protests against the pro-life film *Unplanned*.

Media

It is based on the story of a woman that worked in an abortion clinic but had a profound change of heart. It has been criticised in the media and by pro-choice advocates who say it is inaccurate and harmful.

Eilís Mulroy of the Pro Life

Campaign said: "It is unreal the speed at which abortion supporters have moved to try and shut down this film.

"This film tells the true story of Abby Johnson's change of mind from being the director of one of America's largest abortion clinics to becoming a whistle-blower and opening up about the truth of what goes on in the abortion industry.

"Abby has consistently shown a willingness to engage with those on the other side of this debate and explain her position. Sadly many of her opponents have opted instead for protest and undermining the film rather than engaging with those who they disagree with."

This comes as *Unplanned* will run for a second week in cinemas across the country. Cinema listings can be found at www.unplannedfilm.com/ireland

Abortion and domestic abuse are 'symptoms of a society obsessed with choice'

The British imposition of a liberal abortion regime on Northern Ireland is "appalling" and "undemocratic", Ireland's newest bishop has said.

Speaking in Drogheda on international 'Day for Life' Sunday, Armagh's Auxiliary Bishop Michael Router said Westminster's attempt to introduce abortion in the North is "not only appalling in itself but also undemocratic as the citizens of the North have not been given any say in the development of the creeping policy".

Bishop Router said next weekend has been

designated as a week-end of prayer for the right to life, and called on Catholics north and south of the border to contact political parties to express concern and to push for the restoration of the Stormont Assembly.

Violence

Dr Router's homily focused on domestic abuse, which he described as "a hidden form of toxic behaviour in some families throughout the world".

He described domestic violence, abortion and drug-related violence as



Armagh Auxiliary Bishop Michael Router.

"symptoms of a society that is losing its moral compass and which places little value on anything other than the individual's right to choose in all matters even if those choices bring destruction on themselves or others".



Local children bring their dog Molly to Knock Shrine for a blessing from Fr Richard Gibbons during the Blessing of the Animals in honour of St Francis over the weekend.

Bare-faced cheek: Facebook ban Glenstal monks book ad

Staff reporter

The social media giant Facebook have found a new book by the Glenstal monks in Limerick too raunchy for their platform.

Published by Columba Books, 'Glen-

stal Abbey: through the seasons' depicts the lives of the Limerick based monks and includes some religious paintings by resident monk and artist Br Emmaus.

However Facebook told Columba Books that the paintings

"show too much skin" which is against their policies and banned the advertisements. One of the paintings is of St Michael the Archangel.

Mary Whitehouse's legacy is safe and warm within the global platform of Facebook.

Precious Life says Westminster abortion guidelines for NI 'spell death'

Staff reporter

Guidelines published by the Westminster government on abortion law set to be imposed on Northern Ireland have been dubbed "vague" and could "open the floodgate" by a pro-life group.

The abortion guidelines, published this week for healthcare professionals, cover a period from October 22 of this year to March 31, 2020. These guidelines will only come into force if Stormont is not restored by October 21.

They state that no criminal charges can be brought against women who have an abortion or against health professionals who assist in providing abortion.

Although Precious Life were still reviewing the guidelines, Director Bernadette Smyth said: "I think overall the reality is we're looking at abortion being made available in Northern Ireland especially for children with life-limiting disabilities.

"These guidelines can be used to take the lives of disabled children, regarding what they call fatal foetal abnormality and serious anomaly...they're very vague."

Concerns

There are also concerns about conscientious objection for doctors who don't want to facilitate abortion, as the guidelines state that in England and Wales it is limited to a "hands on" capacity.

It says that in the interim period "anyone who has a conscientious objection to abortion may want to raise this with their employer".

"The reality is these guidelines spell out death for future unborn children and no protection for the doctors with a conscientious objection," said Mrs Smyth. "A gagging order has been placed within these guidelines."

She added: "What we should be saying now is that every single member of the Northern Ireland Assembly must read these guidelines, because this is the reality of what will be introduced into Northern Ireland if the Stormont government is not reconvened by October 21."

Expert 'coalface voices' vital in end-of-life debates

Greg Daly

Doctors must drive debates around assisted suicide, and should not allow politicians and lobby groups to dominate the discussions, a conference of doctors has heard.

Speaking at the fifth conference of the Irish Catholic Doctors Learning Network, Dr Chris Garrett said terms like "death with dignity" have been hijacked by advocates of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, presenting this as a "value neutral term" when it is nothing of the sort.

"With adequate palliative care, we have it in our ability to control suffering," said the oncologist-turned-seminarian at the conference on Saturday in Dublin's Emmaus Centre. "Our goal should not be suicide, but should be helping our palliative care services."

Palliative care

Criticising how some advocates of assisted suicide mis-

represent aspects of palliative care as forms of euthanasia, he said that while statistics show doctors in general as opposing the legalisation of assisted suicide, palliative care specialists tend to be especially opposed.

"The people with the technical experience at the coalface, who have walked with people – unfortunately they have the greatest amount of experience and knowledge," he told *The Irish Catholic*, explaining that many people, especially young people, have limited knowledge and experience of palliative care and end-of-life matters.

"Many young people have not experienced death and dying, and in fact in our society we almost want to protect our young people from dying, not bringing them to funerals and so on in case it scars them," he said.

"On fiscal matters we get the economists involved, we don't ask general people what

the Budget should be, and I think in this case we need the experts with the most knowledge of bioethics, which is complicated, and in palliative care, because they're the ones who are actually dealing with it and have the greatest amount of knowledge," he said, adding: "I wouldn't want people to make a decision based on misinformation."

Decisions

Acknowledging that there can be a frustration with expert opinion nowadays, Dr Garrett said: "I think if you want a quality opinion then probably the people who are most experienced will make the best decisions and give you the best information."

Other speakers at the conference were psychiatrist Prof. Patricia Casey, commentator John Waters, and Cardinal Willem Eijk of Utrecht, who worked as a doctor before entering the priesthood.

Dublin archbishop caused IEC 'cloud'

A top Vatican cardinal has accused Dublin's Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of excessive negativity and in focusing too much on the Church's failures.

Speaking at the Autumn conference of the Association of Leaders of Missionaries

and Religious of Ireland (AMRI) in Dublin, Cardinal Peter Turkson, who heads the Holy See's Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, said the Church needs to "find a way of exiting" the abuse scandals.

At 2012's International

Eucharistic Conference in Dublin, he said, it seemed as though Archbishop Martin gave an apology at every event. "At one point I thought it was too much. I thought he was making this huge cloud hang over everything," he said.



Sr Colette and Sr Gabriel with Nicola McNabb, Florentine Hayden and Louise McGuinness at the launch of 'Calm the Soul'.

Irish nuns receive warm reception after releasing 'soul-lifting' song

Claire Fitzpatrick

The Poor Clares in Galway have received a great confidence boost after releasing a devotional song on Youtube viewed by almost 15,000 people so far.

'Calm the Soul', based on a poem published by the Sisters in 2012, was composed to raise the spirits of those struggling under pressures of everyday life – as Sr Colette, Abbess of the monastery coined it, "a soul lift".

Sr Colette stated the poem was able to touch people "so deeply that we thought

that a musical setting to the words could make it more widely accessible".

The sisters placed hope for the success of the song in God's hands. "It's God's business what happens with the song, and if it makes the charts that would be great," said Sr Colette.

Views

'Calm the Soul' had 14,401 views on YouTube since its October 3 debut, and was placed 32 on Ireland's iTunes chart at the time of print, having previously been 18.

The song is available to download on YouTube, iTunes, Amazon and GooglePlay.

Education Minister says faith ethos can't hinder sex ed classes

Staff reporter

Ethos cannot be allowed to interfere with the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in schools, Education Minister Joe McHugh has said.

Speaking during a debate about a report on RSE published by the Oireachtas Education Committee, he said even now, "schools are obliged to teach all elements of the [RSE] curriculum".

Minister McHugh told TDs "No element [of RSE] can be omitted on the grounds of school ethos or characteristic spirit". He accepted that RSE has to be "age-appropriate" and involve discussions with parents about its content.

RSE was first introduced to schools 20 years ago and is currently being reviewed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). There have

been calls to introduce far more content about gay and transsexual issues, and about consent, as well as pornography following the rise of the internet and smartphones in the last two decades.

Socialist TD Ruth Coppinger and Fianna Fáil's Fiona O'Loughlin are among those who have argued that the ethos of Catholic and other faith schools might 'interfere' with the teaching of the full RSE curriculum.

Ruth Coppinger has told the Dáil that students should no longer be taught that there are only two 'genders', male and female. Transgender ideology says there are many different genders.

The NCCA has invited all interested parties including parents to take part in the review. They can do so via the NCCA website under 'consultations' up to October 25.

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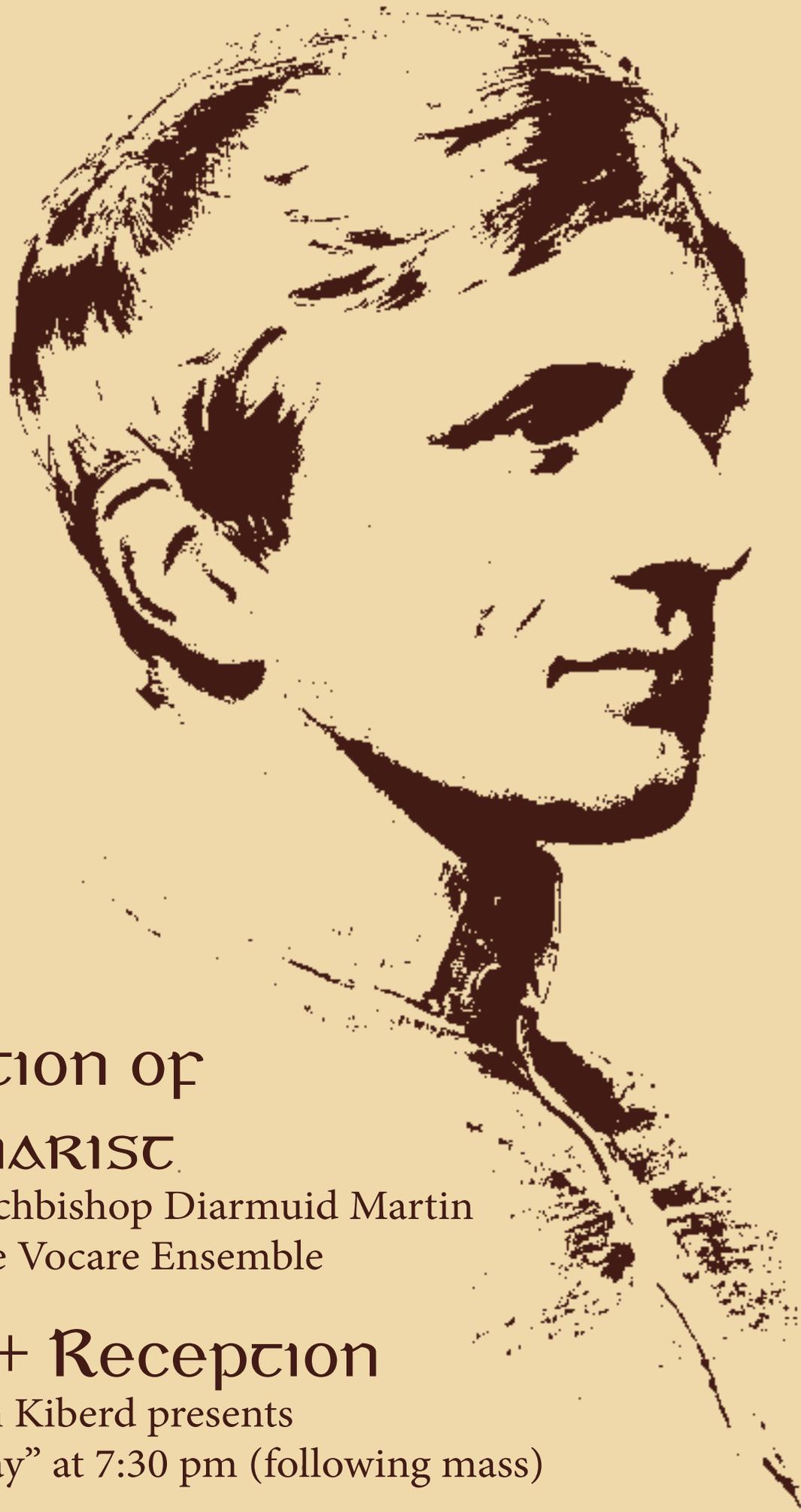
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The Spanish woman who is Ireland's top Newman expert

It was my good fortune to discover that my Dublin neighbour, in Stillorgan, is Dr Teresa Iglesias, the much admired scholar, academic and specialist on John Henry Newman. She edited with a new preface Newman's famous text *The Idea of a University* and has been closely involved in preparations for the canonisation in Rome later this week (see Teresa's article on Newman and Ireland on pages 14 and 15).

Teresa is lively, friendly, energetic and merry, a Spanish-born single woman of personal charm and neat chic. She was one of nine children, born in Salamanca in the 1940s: they are a long-lived family and all but one of her siblings is still alive, and all seem to be high achievers.

Teresa's doctorate was on the philosopher Wittgenstein, and her second speciality became medical ethics. She lectured at UCD for some years and at Oxford's Linacre Centre, (now the Anscombe Centre for Bioethics). Her medical ethics guidelines were:



Mary Kenny



Newman House, Dublin; inset, Dr Teresa Iglesias. Main photo: UCD/Digital Library

"Heal. Care. Do no harm."

Then, in the early 1990s, when teaching at UCD, a Colomban priest, Fr Patrick Bastable, who was ailing, approached her in connection with a trust he hoped to found to promote Newman's exemplary life and educational principles. She became a founding member of the Newman Trust and Fr Bastable's 700 Newman books were bequeathed to it.

The care and curating of these books were now Teresa's responsibility and eventually these found a home at Newman House in Stephen's Green: the books are now part of the Newman Research Library.

Full life

With a group of interested friends Teresa also started the Newman Society of Ireland in 1996: they meet monthly to enhance the

study and reading of his life's work. In 2004, the Newman Trust and UCD agreed to establish a Centre for Newman Studies, initiated by Teresa.

(For four years, between 2009 and 2013, Teresa was back in Salamanca, caring for her widowed and fragile father – a most dutiful daughter. And then she returned to Dublin, where her life is very active and full.)

UCD, which was originally associated with Newman studies (as it owned Newman House) is now very much a self-declared secular university and, it would seem, not overly keen to emphasise its historic links with a Catholic saint. Thus the Newman Centre is now "for the study of religions" – plural – rather than with Newman's Catholic faith.

Teresa Iglesias became, thus, a specialist in the field of Newman studies in Ireland, and is one of the best-informed experts on Newman. As a permanent member of the Newman

● As it happens, when I decided to have a tattoo on my left arm about three years ago, I chose a quote from John Henry Newman: "To live is to change..." It is, of course, only part of the quotation, and I am now contemplating a second tattoo on the right arm, to complete it: "...and to be perfect is to have changed often". My only worry about this second part is that the challenge to perfection is somewhat daunting...

Trust and the Newman Society, she works in close collaboration with University Church, just next door to Newman House (which now houses MOLI, the Museum of Literature Ireland).

“Let us do our duty as it presents itself: this is the secret of true faith and peace”

She'll be one of a special group from Ireland – headed by Fr William Dailey of Notre Dame and University Church – going to Rome for the canonisation. With Steven Warner, she has helped to put together an exquisite booklet of music

along with the *Principles of John Henry Newman*, which I very much hope will be available to a wider public.

One of these principles is a true inspiration to me, in everyday life. "Let us do our duty as it presents itself: this is the secret of true faith and peace." It is Newman's advice to take each day as it comes and do the best we can in each day. "One step enough for me," as he says in his wonderful hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light*.

We often hear it said that more women should be involved with faith issues and with teaching and scholarship within the Catholic Church. Teresa Iglesias – impeccable scholar and optimistic personality – is certainly a model for that.

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A Catholic guide to modern politics



How can a global religion help us navigate a global world, asks **David Quinn**

It's fair to say we live in a time of big political turmoil. We don't want to exaggerate, mind you. It is not anything like as turbulent as the years from World War I until the end of World War II.

Nonetheless, the long period of political stability that emerged in many countries after the Second World War II seems to be at an end.

That period was marked in Western Europe by mostly predictable and stable Governments formed by either centre-right or centre-left parties.

In America, there is still a predictable two-party system consisting of the Republicans and the Democrats, but politics are polarising there in a way not



seen in decades, even taking into account the counter-culture of the 1960s.

Now what we see is the emergence of lots of new parties that are grabbing their share of the political cake, with these often being far-left or far-right.

Stability

What has happened to the old political stability? I think a big part of the answer is that globalisation has ended it.

In the past, a great deal of the world was not yet competing with the West. We competed mostly with ourselves and each Western country was more or less on the same level economically,

although the likes of Ireland lagged for a long time.

But then, roughly 30 years ago, the Iron Curtain came down and suddenly the countries of Eastern Europe entered the global marketplace. Now they could compete to attract jobs that would never have gone there in the days of communism. In addition, following entry into the EU, workers from those countries could come to our countries looking for jobs.

Even more significantly, China entered the global marketplace. China was poor, with a massive population. Now it could attract investment and jobs from giant, Western corporations

offering cheap, educated labour. This was a real game-changer.

India, with its vast population, also began far-reaching economic reforms with an impact on the world economy.

The effect has been the more and more people in the West, especially the working class, feel their livelihoods are threatened, as their jobs disappear overseas.

They also believe they face increased competition from immigrants. Immigration has been a huge political issue in much of Europe, as well as America, and the refusal of the main parties to acknowledge the concerns of many voters over

many years has driven those voters into the arms of the nationalist right, including the likes of Donald Trump in the US, and Matteo Salvini in Italy.

What are Catholics to make of all this, and crucially should we be pro or anti-globalisation, pro or anti-immigration?

“The nation-state is simply a bigger version of the local community which is a bigger version of the tribe”

There is no straightforward answer to this. That said, in my view Catholic teaching does not permit us to be totally anti-immigration. It is un-Christian to simply close your borders to those in need.

On the other hand, you are not required to favour totally open borders either with no limits placed on immigration. Catholic teaching permits us to be concerned about the effects mass immigration would have on your own society, especially on the less-well-off.

In other words, there is a balance to be struck and it is perfectly acceptable for Catholics to lie somewhere between the two extremes and argue (respectfully hopefully) over where the balance is to be found.

Borders are, of course, an expression of the nation-state. What should Catholics think about the nation-state? Obviously, many voters now believe that globalisation is eroding the nation-state and they feel less secure and threatened as a result. It is no good simply lecturing them about

this or denouncing them as racists. As mentioned, it is more the working class than the middle class who feel threatened by immigration and free trade so it's easy for the middle class to lecture them and feel superior.

“More and more people in the West... feel their livelihoods are threatened, as their jobs disappear overseas”

Again, there is no definitive Catholic answer to this matter. Catholicism is a universal religion. It believes everyone is my neighbour and not just the person next door. The EU seeks to bring about 'ever closer union' between all its member-states. This is fully compatible with Catholicism and most of the founders of the EU (as it is now called) were committed Catholics.

But it is also fully acceptable to believe in the nation-state so long as this belief doesn't harden into an aggressive nationalism that defines itself against everyone else and seeks to make enemies.

The nation-state is simply a bigger version of the local community which is a bigger version of the tribe, clan or family. Just as we are allowed to take special responsibility for our family members, it is perfectly permissible to take special responsibility for those who are part of the historical local community, in our case, Ireland. That is also perfectly compatible with Christianity and Catholicism, within certain limits.

The same applies to free trade. We could take the attitude that everyone in the world should be as free to sell their goods here as someone from Ireland or the EU and therefore remove all tariffs and regulatory barriers to trade.

This might help enrich (say) farmers from Africa or Brazil, but it might harm the livelihoods of Irish farmers. So once again there is no easy answer to this question, and it is acceptable for a Catholic to be for or against free trade or be somewhere in between.

The key guiding principle must be that the care of the most vulnerable is foremost. Catholics are perfectly free to decide where the right balance lies in these issues, while carefully avoiding demonising each other when we disagree about it.



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A saint for our times

“To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often” – John Henry Newman

John Henry Newman will be canonised as a new saint of the Catholic Church on October 13 by Pope Francis in Rome. A saint is a man or woman who is recognised as having an outstanding degree of holiness, likeness or closeness to God.

Saints are made by official Church declaration or by popular acclamation (a folk saint). Newman may fit into both categories because of the impact he made on the teachings of the Catholic Church and the popular appeal of his devotional writings. Many of his prayers and hymns are very familiar to us and are part of the treasure of our faith for many generations.

So who is John Henry Newman? He was born on February 21, 1801 to a well-to-do family in London. As a young student of 15 years old while in boarding school in Ealing he underwent a spiritual conversion that would lead him on the journey in the direction of perfection, the journey towards “a perfect peace” as Newman described the goal of his pilgrim journey.

After studying in Oxford he was elected a fellow of Oriel College ordained in the Church of England and became Vicar at St Mary's Oxford where he was much loved as conscientious, diligent and faithful pastor. In the 1830's he became the leader of a spiritual renewal movement that became known as the Oxford Movement.

His studies of the Fathers of the Church, returning to the source, led him to the conclusion that Roman Catholic Church was the “one fold of Christ”. After a long interior struggle he was eventually received into the Catholic Church by Dominic Barberi at Littlemore and for a time there he retired to live a monastic type of life, having been ostracised by his family and friends.

Priest

Having been ordained a priest in Rome, Newman returned to Birmingham and set up the first Oratorian Congregation there and another soon followed in London. At the invitation of the Irish Bishops he became rector of the Catholic University in Dublin. While some would describe the University project to be a failure, nevertheless it was instrumental in the eventual founding of UCD and a famous set of lectures on the nature and theory of education in



Newman speaks as clearly to us today as to his peers in the 19th Century, writes **Bishop Fintan Monahan**

The Idea of a University.

Soon afterwards he composed his famous *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, his spiritual autobiography in which he vindicated his honesty in the Church of England and defended the Church of Rome.

Newman continued to write on many religious issues of the day and carried on an enormous correspondence with so many, Catholic and non-Catholic. He suffered much from misunderstandings, suspicions and opposition from a number of sources. In 1879 Newman was made a Cardinal and by the time of his death in Birmingham in 1890 it was said that more than any other person he had changed the attitude of non-Catholics towards Catholics in England.

* * * * *

In 1991, Newman was proclaimed venerable by Pope John Paul II, after an examination of his life and work by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In 2000, Jack Sullivan, a man studying for the diaconate in Boston, USA was on the verge of paralysis and claimed to have been miraculously healed after praying to Newman. The miracle was investigated and confirmed by the Vatican. Newman was beatified on 19 September 2010 by Pope Benedict XVI.

A second miracle, necessary for canonisation, was approved by the Vatican in November 2018. This miracle concerned the healing of Melissa Villalobos from Chicago. She and her unborn baby had a life-threatening illness and it is believed that through the intercession of Newman both she and her baby survived. On July 1, 2019, with an affirmative vote the canonisation was authorised and the date for the canonisation ceremony was arranged for October 13, 2019.

There are so many ways that Newman connects with us today: in our spiritual reading, through our Faith, in the understanding of theology, in the celebration of our liturgy and as a resource for our prayer lives. Well over a century after his death, we are drawn to

Newman as a religious leader, a writer, an educator, a theologian and a philosopher. Newman was a gifted preacher, a dedicated pastor and a tireless worker for the poor in the parishes he served. There would seem to be something for everyone in Newman's vast body of correspondence, his works of theology, devotion, poetry, novels and theological scholarship.

My introduction to John Henry Newman was as a seminarian enthusiastically reading the spiritual classics. I was very taken by his *Apologia* – his life story. For me it ranked up there with St Augustine's *Confessions*, St Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*, St Teresa of Lisieux's *Journey of a Soul* and Thomas Merton's *Seven Story Mountain*.

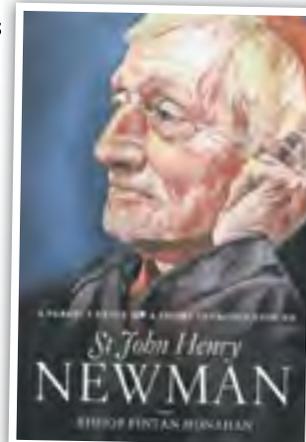
I loved Newman's style of writing, his clarity, the way almost every sentence was dotted with scriptural allusions, all drawing one in a subtle way into the spiritual and theological mystery he was so immersed in and one felt was anxious to share with his readers. It is little wonder that his biographer described him as a “master of musical English prose” and “one of the liveliest letter writers of the Victorian era”.

The cult of the ‘hero’ or outstanding person was always a part of peoples' lives and is still important for people today. We humans seem to need ‘great’

people or so called ‘superstars’ to look up to in many walks of life. They serve to inspire us by very often showing that the extraordinary is possible. Saints shine a light to show us a clearer pathway to God and we benefit from their example and guidance. Every generation, in the kindly providence of the Lord seems to throw up inspirational figures

who assist us on our spiritual journeys.

In recent times we celebrated the example and outstanding faith of great figures like St Teresa of Calcutta, St John XXIII, St John Paul II, Oscar Romero, saints for our time. It would not be making light of the subject of saints to say that they are the heroes and heroines of our lives of Faith. We need saints





Bishop Fintan Monahan with artist Agnieszka Ryan, receiving a painting of Newman by Ms Ryan, a gift from the priests of his home diocese of Tuam.

Vocation Prayer

The famous prayerful reflection before the Lord, seeking guidance and direction in discerning our mission, our vocation path in life is always worth reflecting on:

“God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

“He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work.

“I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.

“Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about.”

as much today as ever before and John Henry Newman is in my opinion a great example of a Saint for our time. He lifetime may have spanned the 19th Century, but his message speaks loudly for us today in the 21st Century.

* * * * *

Newman may have been deeply mourned on the occasion of his death but the Catholic Church worldwide was not left deprived by his passing. He left behind in an enormous number of publications his ideas on education, the role of the laity, the understanding of conscience, papal infallibility and many more groundbreaking ideas.

It has been observed that he sowed the seeds for much of the thinking that was to emerge in the Second Vatican Council, almost a century after Newman's time. His ability to combine the intellectual, the spiritual, the moral and to make it relevant to the current situation is truly remarkable. It should come as no wonder that he is now being granted the Church's highest accolade of sainthood. It would appear that it would only be a matter of time before he will further to that be declared a 'Doctor' of the Church.

My intention for this short article on Cardinal Newman is to introduce him to those who don't know him, and to re-introduce him to those whose familiarity with Newman may have waned with the passage of time.

First introduction or reacquainting, I hope a happy relationship with our new saint's life and work will develop and endure. Likewise, may it be an added joy for all of us that we may now pray to him as a saint for our time.

📌 Bishop Fintan Monahan is Bishop of Killaloe and author of *A Perfect Peace: Newman – Saint for Our Time*, published by Veritas.

● I have selected a number of Newman's more famous, prayers, hymns, sayings and mottos that give an insight into his spirituality, his vision, his prayer, his closeness to God in many ways...

The 'Fragrance' Prayer

The deep desire Newman had for God and longing for union with the Lord in heaven is captured in the Jesus Prayer, a prayer that is said by many as a post communion reflection:

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance everywhere.

Flood my soul with your Spirit and Your life.

Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life maybe only a radiance of yours.

Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Your presence in my soul.

Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus. Amen.

Anima Christi Prayer

The poetic and musical translation of the classic *Anima Christi* has been recited as a post communion reflection by many generations:

Soul of Christ, be my sanctification;
Body of Christ, be my salvation;
Blood of Christ, fill all my veins;
Water of Christ's side, wash out my stains;
Passion of Christ, my comfort be;

O good Jesus, listen to me;
In Thy wounds I fain would hide;
Ne'er to be parted from Thy side;

Guard me, should the foe assail me;
Call me when my life shall fail me;

Bid me come to Thee above,
With Thy saints to sing Thy love,
World without end. Amen.

Prayer for the dying from *The Dream of Gerontius*

The prayer for the dying from the famous musical *The Dream of Gerontius* captures some of Newman's eschatology, his great hope and belief in the afterlife. It is a prayer so often recited at the bedside of those preparing to depart this world:

Go forth, Christian soul, from this world

In the name of God the almighty Father who created you,

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who suffered for you,

In the name of the Holy Spirit who was poured out upon you. Go forth Christian soul

May you live in peace this day, may your home be with God in Sion, with Mary the virgin Mother of God, with Joseph and all the angels and saints...

May you return to [your Creator] who formed you from the dust of the earth.

May holy Mary, the angels and all the saints, come to meet you as you go forth from this life...

May you see your Redeemer face to face. Amen.

Two famous mottos...

● The motto chosen by him when he was made Cardinal was *Cor ad cor loquitur* ('Heart Speaks to Heart'). This motto was chosen because Newman admired its use in St Francis de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life*.

It captures the interior space he had come to at that point in his life, in retirement, harvesting a lifetime of experience in deep contemplation and in anticipation

The Pillar of Cloud - Lead Kindly Light

Apart from the many saying, prayers, poems, spiritual, literary and theological writings a number of the hymns composed by Newman are very much part of our liturgical tradition. 'The Pillar of Cloud, Lead Kindly Light' is a typical example and it captures so much of the indomitable spirit of the man who despite many challenges, crosses, disappointments, failures in life still persevered to the end with an undaunted spirit:

Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom.

Lead Thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home.

Lead Thou me on!

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see

The distant scene, one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou Should lead me on.

I loved to choose and see my path; but now Lead though me on!

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears, Pride ruled my will; remember not past years.

So long that I power hath blest me, sure it's still

Will lead me on.

O'er more and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till The night is gone:

And with the morn those Angel faces smile Which I have loved long since, and lost a while.

of the beatific vision.

● On his memorial tablet the words Newman had chosen *Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem* ('Out of shadows and phantoms into the truth'). It expresses in a succinct way similar to his Cardinal's motto the searching and seeking of out pilgrim way and its eventual destination in union with God, the ultimate truth.

Prayer for Perseverance

Perhaps Newman's most famous prayer of all is the much-loved prayer for perseverance:

May Christ support us all the day long

Till shades lengthen

And the evening comes

And the busy world is hushed

And a fever of life is over

And our work is done.

Then in his mercy

May give us the safe lodging

A holy rest

And peace at last.

Amen.

Amen.

Prayer to Our Lady

The simple prayer to Our Lady expresses Newman's great devotion to Our Lady and gives a window into why he is regarded as such an important figure in ecumenical outreach:

May the Blessed Mary Be your protection and comfort

This day and all days

Till she welcomes you

To the eternal Home

Above. Amen.

Newman and Ireland: unlikely allies in turbulent times



John Henry Newman wasn't always an obvious friend of this country, writes **Fr Bernard Healy**

When we look at the beginning of John Henry Newman's public life, it would be hard to imagine a less likely friend of the Irish. In 1829, he was an up-and-coming Oxford academic and Anglican clergyman.

This was the time when Daniel O'Connell secured the passing of Catholic Emancipation at Westminster. Fear of Irish unrest meant that the Tory MP for Oxford University Sir Robert Peel broke an election promise to resist Emancipation and resigned his seat; Newman came to prominence campaigning in favour of the candidate who defeated Peel. Whilst Newman himself seems to have supported Emancipation in 1828 he could not tolerate Peel's reversal on a point of principle touching the welfare of the Anglican Church.

Newman worried about the power of O'Connell. As a political conservative by nature, O'Connell's populism sat uneasily with him and tainted his view of Catholics. He could admire Pope Gregory XVI for standing squarely against the spirit of liberal populism in Europe. O'Connell, however, harnessed that populism for the sake of the Catholic Irish and allied himself with political and religious liberals in Britain.

These liberals were the very people that Newman blamed for undermining the religious and social order. This alliance persuaded Newman that the Papacy and Catholics (both English and Irish) were opportunistic rather than principled. That being said, even though he deplored what he saw as O'Connell's bullying, he was uneasy about injustices committed against Irish Catholics.

Burdens

Newman's rise to prominence would continue to be fuelled by Irish affairs. With a growing understanding in England of the burdens placed on the Irish poor, the ruling Whig government of 1830-1834 drew up plans for reform.

Newman's closest Irish friend in Oxford was the well-regarded theologian William Palmer of

Worcester College. Palmer was the son of a Dublin army officer and took orders following studies at Trinity College, Dublin. In Oxford, he would be a stout defender of the Church of Ireland. Under Palmer's influence, any doubts Newman previously had about the legitimacy of the Church of Ireland were assuaged and this strengthened his resistance to change.

Writing to a friend he said that he was "truly glad the Orange Spirit is up, and hope those vermin [the Whig party] will have enough to do with them".

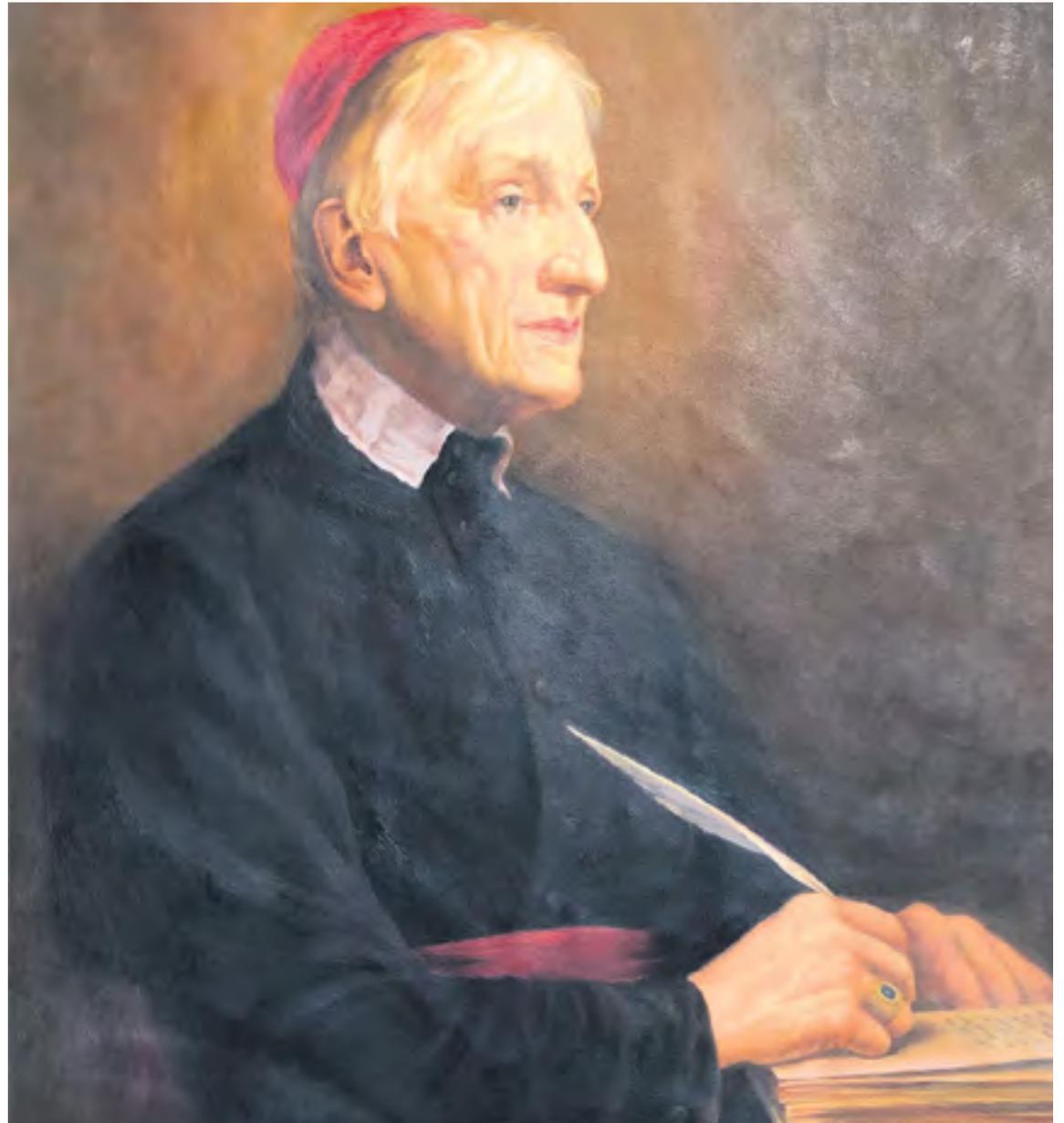
When Parliament passed the Church Temporalities Act in 1833, radically reorganising the Church of Ireland, Newman was moved to action. This was to lead to surprising results. Despite Palmer's influence, Newman professed himself agnostic about the reforms themselves. The key objection was that this reform was effected by the State rather than the by Irish Anglican hierarchy. If this could be done to the Irish Church, then surely the Church of England was next!

“In 1841, Russell wrote to Newman gently correcting various misunderstandings about Catholicism. A correspondence and a life-long friendship developed”

In preparation for a Church-State showdown, Newman saw the need for a spiritual and theological renewal, a "second reformation". Through publications, personal influence and preaching, Newman and others sought to strengthen Anglicanism. He sought a *Via Media* of a Reformed Catholicism, faithful to the Catholicism of the early Church but purified of superstition and corruption by the Reformation.

To the horror of those around him, including Palmer, this project of renewal within the Church of England was to lead Newman and a number of companions to the Roman Catholic Communion, with Newman converting in 1845 at what would be the midpoint of his life.

A recent article by Patrick Manning in *The Furrow* points out O'Connell's ironic role in that conversion. The *Liberator* financed the 1836 establishment of the Catholic magazine *The Dublin Review*. The *Review* took an interest



in the Oxford Movement, both challenging it and encouraging its Rome-ward drift. An August 1839 article in the *Review* by Dr Nicholas Wiseman would shatter Newman's conviction that the Church of England was fully part of the one true Church.

* * * * *

If *The Dublin Review* pushed Newman out of Anglicanism, a young Maynooth professor, Dr Charles Russell, did much to smooth Newman's path to Rome. Newman wrote that Russell "had perhaps more to do with my conversion than any one else".

In 1841, Russell wrote to Newman gently correcting

various misunderstandings about Catholicism. A correspondence and a life-long friendship developed, with Russell putting Newman in touch with the realities of Catholic thought. Russell's delicacy and reserve can be judged from the fact that when he visited Oxford, Newman and he spent their time sightseeing rather than debating theology.

Having converted to Catholicism, Newman went to Rome in 1846 to study for the priesthood. Probably the most significant Irish contact that Newman made in Rome was Paul Cullen, then Rector of the Irish College. Cullen and Newman seem to have hit it off well. Newman visited the Irish College a number

of times and probably attended Cullen's lectures in Hebrew and Scripture.

When Newman translated some of his theology into Latin to be better understood by the Italians, Cullen was one of the two censors who approved it. A copy of that book with a note of thanks from Newman can be found in the Pontifical Irish College Library.

Newman preached his first sermon as a Catholic (before he was even ordained a deacon) in the Irish Franciscan church of St Isidoro for the funeral of an aristocratic Irish girl Octavia Catherine Bryan who died in Rome. Newman thought the sermon a failure, but a contemporary French account

“Having converted to Catholicism, Newman went to Rome in 1846 to study for the priesthood. Probably the most significant Irish contact that Newman made in Rome was Paul Cullen, then Rector of the Irish College”



Cardinal Paul Cullen.

admitted later that he did not know enough about Ireland to make a thorough success of the project. Even the most supportive bishops (Moriarty of Kerry and Ryan of Limerick) differed from him in educational vision. MacHale of Tuam was suspicious of the English appointments that Newman made to the University staff, while Cullen thought some Irish academics were tainted by association with the Young Ireland movement.

“As well as the University itself, Newman founded what is now UCD’s Literary and Historical (Debating) Society, and the beautiful University Church on St Stephen’s Green”

Cullen and Newman could not work well together; Cullen was frequently neglecting to reply to Newman’s letters and disapproving of the relatively mild regime that Newman had in mind for the students. It is worth noting that one of these first students was a grandson of Daniel O’Connell!

Newman’s letters home have a comical character as he describes his difficulties. Hospitality is warm but not to his taste. The bloody mutton, served as a delicacy in his honour, turns his stomach. At his lodgings in Harcourt Street, the cleaning lady takes it upon herself not only to tidy his room, but to Newman’s horror, decides to re-arrange the scholar’s papers, sorting them not by subject or by date, but by size!

Nonetheless, Newman appreciated the Irish people, their “cleverness” and their welcome. The experience of being a Catholic priest amongst a Catholic people gave him a great respect for them. He would hold up Dublin as an exemplar of a place where the Catholic faith was lived and communicated by the common people in contrast to those regimes where Catholicism was imposed from above.

Newman had two particular reasons for gratitude. When on trial in London in 1852 for criminal libel for denouncing sexual abuse committed by the apostate Dominican Giacinto Achilli, the ordinary people of Ireland supported his legal defence fund. Secondly, he knew that the regular parishioners of Ireland contributed to the collections for his university when the gentry did not.

Newman argued that a great weakness of the Irish Church was that the bishops would not allow the laity their proper place, with Cullen forbidding a lay committee for university finances. The gentry were therefore lukewarm in supplying money and students. Newman said they “were treated like good little boys, were told to shut their eyes and open their mouths, and take what we gave to them, and this they did not relish”.

Amongst the prominent laity Newman was to cultivate a number of friends. He persuaded

refers to his “most touching and consoling words”.

After ordination, Newman returned to England to found the Birmingham Oratory. He gradually acquired a whole circle of clerical and lay Catholic friends, including some Irish.

Of most note, perhaps, was Dr David Moriarty of All Hallows’ College (later Bishop of Kerry) who visited Newman in 1849 and would become one of Newman’s best friends and supporters, and John Stanislas Flanagan, who joined the Birmingham Oratory in 1848. Flanagan served effectively and energetically as an Oratorian priest until ill-health caused his departure for Italy in 1860.

Ultimately he would return to Ireland as Parish Priest of Adare in Co. Limerick but remained on very friendly terms with Newman.

Although the foundation brief of the Oratory mentioned an apostolate to the upper classes, its location meant serving the Irish immigrant population of Birmingham.

Newman’s Anglican parish ministry in Oxford involved working with the poorer classes, but this was a new phenomenon for him. Hundreds of Irish sought out Newman, and the Oratorians ministered as best they could. Some resented this ministry and Newman himself was disgusted by the crude manners of his new flock who left the passage outside the Oratory stinking like a public toilet, but despite worrying that the Irish

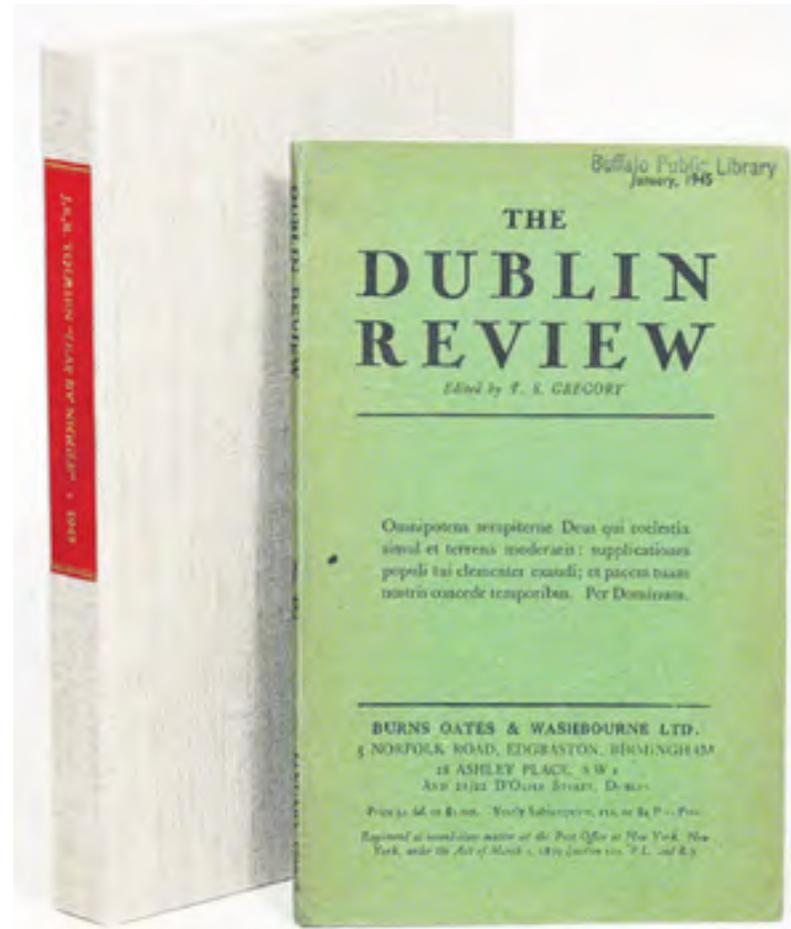
might drive away more affluent English inquirers, he accepted the ministry given to him and stayed with the Irish poor in Birmingham rather than move to London where there was easier access to the educated classes of English society.

“Newman argued that a great weakness of the Irish Church was that the bishops would not allow the laity their proper place”

At the Synod of Thurles in 1850, the Irish hierarchy decided to open a university in response to the British Government’s establishment of the non-denominational Queen’s Colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway. Paul Cullen, then Archbishop of Armagh, tapped his friend Newman for the task. Newman would therefore split his time and his energies between the university and the Birmingham Oratory from 1851 until 1858, crossing the Irish Sea 56 times in that period.

He did not have an easy time of it. Working in a country he did not know well, he was entangled in various disputes. As Fergal McGrath SJ put it, the feuding Archbishops Cullen – from May 1852 Archbishop of Dublin – and MacHale “were like two old country fiddlers playing on the delicate Stradivarius of Newman’s temperament”.

He couldn’t direct university affairs as he wished, although he



the poet Aubrey de Vere to take a professorship in the university, whilst the Limerick MP William Monsell afforded him the use of his home at Tervoe, Clarina as a retreat.

Newman left Ireland in 1858, never to return and somewhat frustrated at his treatment at the hands of Cullen and MacHale. Although the University did not thrive, as an academic community it made a fair contribution to the life of the nation prior to incorporation into UCD in the early 20th Century.

“After his time in Ireland, Newman kept up his friendships and through them continued to develop his understanding of Irish affairs”

As well as the University itself, Newman founded what is now UCD’s Literary and Historical (Debating) Society, and the beautiful University Church on St Stephen’s Green. Lectures given by Newman in Dublin form the nucleus of what is now known as

The Idea of a University, the classic exposition of what a university should be, as well as an incisive critique of secularism in education. These four fruits of his time as rector are relatively well-known. A fifth is more surprising. To assist the work of Prof. Eugene O’Curry, Newman commissioned a typeface for printing the Irish language. This font was to prove influential in the history of Irish printing and is now known as Newman Irish Type.

After his time in Ireland, Newman kept up his friendships and through them continued to develop his understanding of Irish affairs. Despite their difficulties, Cullen would later speak up for Newman in Rome on a couple of occasions, reassuring the Curia of

the Englishman’s orthodoxy when English enemies were trying to undermine him.

One of the most striking developments in Newman’s life was the change in his political views with respect to the Irish. In Ireland he felt shame for what his country had done, and was touched to the core by those who welcomed him warmly despite having every reason to hate the English.

In 1881, lamenting the slow progress towards land reform, he speculated that Ireland, being a separate nation, would ultimately attain some kind of independence. Part of the reason for British maltreatment of the Irish was, he mused, that English liberalism was not religiously neutral, and had a prejudicial fear of Irish Catholicism, much as the young Newman had.

Thus, when Gladstone sought his influence as cardinal in lobbying the Vatican to condemn certain Irish priests for their political activities, he refused. He even went so far as to speculate privately that the Irish had maintained a such a consistent resistance to English rule that they might be justified in rebellion! A far cry indeed from where Newman began his public career!

Ultimately Newman’s relationship with the Irish is a story of sympathy and personal experience leading to friendship and understanding. Irish kindnesses led Newman out of prejudice and in return this most English of saints poured himself out for the Irish people, developing a true appreciation for them.

In return, the Irish sometimes valued him more than the Catholic establishment in England. Newman’s personal sacrifices for the sake of the faith, his role as underdog who ran afoul of English justice and the work he did in Ireland made Newman an Englishman with a unique claim on Irish affections.

Why did Newman come to



Newman left Ireland three wonderful gifts, writes **Prof. Teresa Iglesias**

From the age of 50 to 57, Newman tirelessly laboured for a “great undertaking” in Dublin, the establishment of the Catholic University of Ireland. These were the years 1851 to 1858, which as regards personal powers and dedication he describes as “some of the most valuable years of my life”. But why did Newman decide to come to Dublin to work in such “great undertaking” during those seven years? This is a question his contemporaries asked him too:

“But what on earth possessed you, my good friend, to have anything to do with the Irish University? What was it to you? How did it fall in your way... Yes, but seriously tell me, what had you to do with it? What was Ireland to you? You had your line and your work; was not that enough?”

These questions were put to him, as he tells us, as part of “a conversation which I have just had with an intimate English friend”.

My purpose in what follows is to give an answer to this ‘why’, so that we can enter into the saintly heart and mind of Newman. At a distance of about 160 years, since Newman left Dublin for good, we can acknowledge how this answer reveals the spiritual foundation of his marvellous achievements in Dublin and the legacy we have received from those seven years.

Gifts

We can count in Ireland today three outstanding gifts Newman left us as permanent tokens of the undertaking that, in his own terms, he brought to completion. Two of these gifts are visible, material objects. One of them, of an intellectual nature, a book, a ‘classic’, *The Idea of a University*. As the scholar Jaroslav Pelikan puts it: “The most important treatise on the idea of a university ever written in any language.”

The second gift, of a spiritual and religious nature, is the beautiful University Church he founded, financed and designed with his friend Professor John Hungerford Pollen as its architect and decorator, a pre-Raphaelite artist.

The Church, in the form of



Pope Benedict XVI celebrating John Henry Newman's beatification Mass in Birmingham in 2010.

an ancient Basilica, is under the patronage of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. Newman considered it “a beautiful imposing structure”, artistically displaying a catechesis on the visible and invisible reality of the Church, its Trinitarian God, its saints, confessors and martyrs, and its history as ‘One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic’, yet pervaded by the presence of Irish Christian tradition and the rich marbles of Ireland.

For the experience of seeing and praying within this little hidden marvel of a Christian church, one has to come to Dublin.

“If he had already in the Birmingham Oratory ‘his line and his work’; ‘was not that enough?’”

His third gift, somewhat invisible and on the side of the eternal, is truly perceptible to us in Ireland today; it is the trail of saintliness he left through his personal influence, which had touched the hearts and minds of those who were in contact with him during those seven years. A trail flowing uninterrupted –

from person to person – in their recognition, admiration and devotion to Newman’s saintly presence and character until today, when we are rejoicing in his canonisation on October 13, 2019. He fulfilled his saying: “I am a bond of connection between persons.”

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Let us return to the question ‘why’. As Newman’s friend told him, if he had already in the Birmingham Oratory “his line and his work”; “was not that enough?” Why interrupt it with a new mission and course of action and in another country?

Let us learn our first lesson of Newman’s trail of saintliness from the way he responded to that unexpected call. The project of founding a university in Ireland for the English-speaking Catholics of the world (i.e. English, Irish and possibly Australian and American) was not Newman’s idea, nor was it his own initiative to deviate from the definitive mission he already had. At first, this call was only an invitation, made to him from Paul Cullen, Archbishop of Armagh at the time, and then a firm request to become the head of the proposed university.

Newman visited Ireland for the first time on September 30, 1851, responding to Cullen’s invitation. Two months later he records in his diary that he has been “Appointed Head of the new University”. The governing University Committee took the decision on November 12, which Newman accepted. ‘Head’ came to mean ‘Rector’.

Exactly seven years later, on November 12, 1858, Newman formally resigned his Rectorship of the Catholic University.

Newman had accepted to participate in the University project – after thorough discernment and consultation with brother Oratorians and close friends – only when the task was manifested to him as ‘a duty’ of obedience to God’s will and design over his own life, because it was an act of obedience to his Vicar on earth.

The appointment Newman accepted was confirmed to him in March 1852, when Pius IX, by his Pontifical authority, writes a letter, a ‘Brief’, establishing the Irish University as ‘The Catholic University of Ireland’.

In one of his very early sermons Newman tells his Christian hearers, and us today too: “Let us do our duty as it presents itself, this is the

secret of true faith and peace”; and later: “Fulfilling one’s own duty is the road to holiness” for “...to seek perfection...You need not go out of the round of the day.”

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By May of that same year, 1852, Newman has begun his arduous task of establishing the university by delivering in Dublin’s Rotunda Hospital, the first discourses of his own vision of a university. With five other undelivered discourses he published them, also in Dublin, as a ten-chapter book, on November 21 of that same year, with the title *Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education*. This eventually constituted the first part of his great single volume *The Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated*, published in London in 1873.

The effort and strain Newman endured in the writing process of these lectures nearly broke him. Nevertheless he emerged happy from the first lecture, as he would do from the rest. He wrote to his close friend Fr Ambrose St John in Birmingham: “thanks to our Lady, [the lecture] has been a hit...”

During that year and in 1853 he continues with the

Dublin?

“By May of that same year, 1852, Newman has begun his arduous task of establishing the University by delivering in Dublin’s Rotunda Hospital, the first discourses of his own vision of a University”



The Rotunda Hospital in Dublin as it is today.

preparations required to get the university started. Having experienced that the work in the university demanded long periods of residence in Dublin, Newman, whose primary duty was “obedience to conscience”, was confronted with an inner personal predicament of conscience that he needed to resolve.

As his obedience to God was through his obedience to the Pope, he had recourse to him. In November 1854, near the time the university was opened, he addressed the Pope by letter:

“Fr John Henry Newman...as it is well known to your Holiness, he sustains a double charge, that of Superior of the Oratory of the Phillipine Fathers at Birmingham in England and that of Rector of the University of Dublin. As this second duty requires his services in person, and this is incompatible with his residing continuously in his house in Birmingham, therefore, to quieten his conscience, he begs Your Holiness to dispense him from

the duty of such residence for some months of the year, for a period of three years.”

“He lived in Dublin with a number of students, who lodged with him in 6 Harcourt Street, and made provisions for other four halls of residence”

The Pope replied to him: “Roma, December 20, 1854. We concede to the Applicant that he may in all tranquility of conscience reside in Ireland for the time required by the needs of the University. Pius P.P. IX.”

It was a characteristic of Newman’s personal way of living saintliness to discern, to act – and also to recommend – that when faced with an unclear course of action, it is appropriate to fixing

a time for that decision to be taken in principle independently of the circumstances. Here is an illustration: in a letter kept in Dublin’s National Library (MS 7911) the author of the letter reports an encounter she had with Newman about her own predicament in becoming a Catholic. She writes:

“Mr Newman immediately points out that as the right course, to fix some time, beyond which, reluctance and hesitation should not be permitted to prevail. I asked him if it would be wrong to make the choice of the appointed time depend upon the probable actions of others in that respect, he said he thought it would not if the action itself was not made to depend upon the actions of others.”

In the same letter the writer notes: “Let me tell you the impression that Mr. Newman made upon me. He is so entirely different from anybody I have ever seen; there is something [...] in the sense of his gentleness and humility; it is unlike what those qualities are

in others: I felt the presence of sanctity and understood its power.”

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The request Newman made in his letter to the Pope in 1854 “for some months of the year, for a period of three years” which was granted, is a request consistent with Newman’s intention and original decision to give his services to the University for a limited time.

He had noted that: “I ever limited my Dublin career, in my thoughts and in my conversation, to seven years...”. For his task, as he saw it, was to initiate such a great institution as founding rector and set it in motion. In this light we can see why he announced his intention of resigning the rectorship of the university in 1857 and formally resigned on November 12, 1858, exactly seven years after accepting his appointment on November 12, 1851. He had committed himself to the project of the University with all his powers for those seven years, and in obedience to his conscience and to the Pope, he had faithfully fulfilled his duty.

“The day Newman left Dublin for good, November 4, 1858, before starting on his final journey to Birmingham, he delivered his farewell lecture”

The chain of major events of academic activity began for Newman when he officially opened the university on November 3, 1854, at 86 St Stephen’s Green in Dublin, welcoming his 20 registered students. Then, on November 9 the Rector gave his inaugural address on ‘Christianity and Letters’ in the newly established School of Philosophy and Letters.

The following year the Medical School was opened on October 10 of 1855 having acquired a handsome building at Cecilia Street, and having equipped its library with over 5,000 volumes. The University Church, built within a year of its commencement, was opened in 1856 on Ascension Sunday, May 1.

During that same year Newman drew up the Rules and Regulations of the University; from May to December, Newman preached five sermons in University Church, and 1857 from January to June preached three more sermons, which were published in London the following July. Newman reckons that from September 1851 until he definitively left Ireland on November 4, 1858, he crossed the Irish Sea about 56 times.

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He lived in Dublin with a number of students, who lodged with him in 6 Harcourt Street, and made provisions for other four halls of residence.

The university Newman governed and left behind was constituted by two major university houses, three faculties, Letters, Science and Medicine, a professorial body of 23 members with their

assisting lectures and tutors, over a hundred students, and a University Church, claiming that “Such an institution will give unity to the various academic functions...it will maintain and symbolise the great principle in which we glory as our characteristic, the union of Science with Religion”.

Appreciation

Time has vindicated the appreciation made in 1969 by the Irish Newman scholar, Fergal McGrath:

“Few will deny that the seven years devoted by Newman to the Catholic University of Ireland would not have been wasted if their sole result had been to give to the English language one of its acknowledged classics, the Discourses now known as The Idea of a University. But Newman accomplished much more besides.”

The day Newman left Dublin for good, November 4, 1858, before starting on his final journey to Birmingham, he delivered his farewell lecture, ‘Christianity and Medical Science,’ to a packed audience in University Church. It is a summing up of Newman’s mission in Dublin. The last words of this historical farewell witness to his greatness and generosity:

“...though this University, and Faculty of Medicine which belongs to it, are as yet only in the commencement of their long career of usefulness, yet while I live, and (I trust) after life, it will be ever a theme of thankfulness for my heart and my lips, that I have been allowed to do even a little, and to witness so much, of the arduous, pleasant, and hopeful toil which has attended on their establishment.”

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There is beautiful Irish document, written on vellum in the Newman Archives in Birmingham, sent to Newman in May of 1879, 20 years after his departure from Ireland. Its purpose is to congratulate Newman on becoming a cardinal. It is a letter addressed to him from the ‘Catholic University of Ireland. Bono Club’, and signed by its well-known Hon. Secs. William Dillon and H.J. Gill. It states:

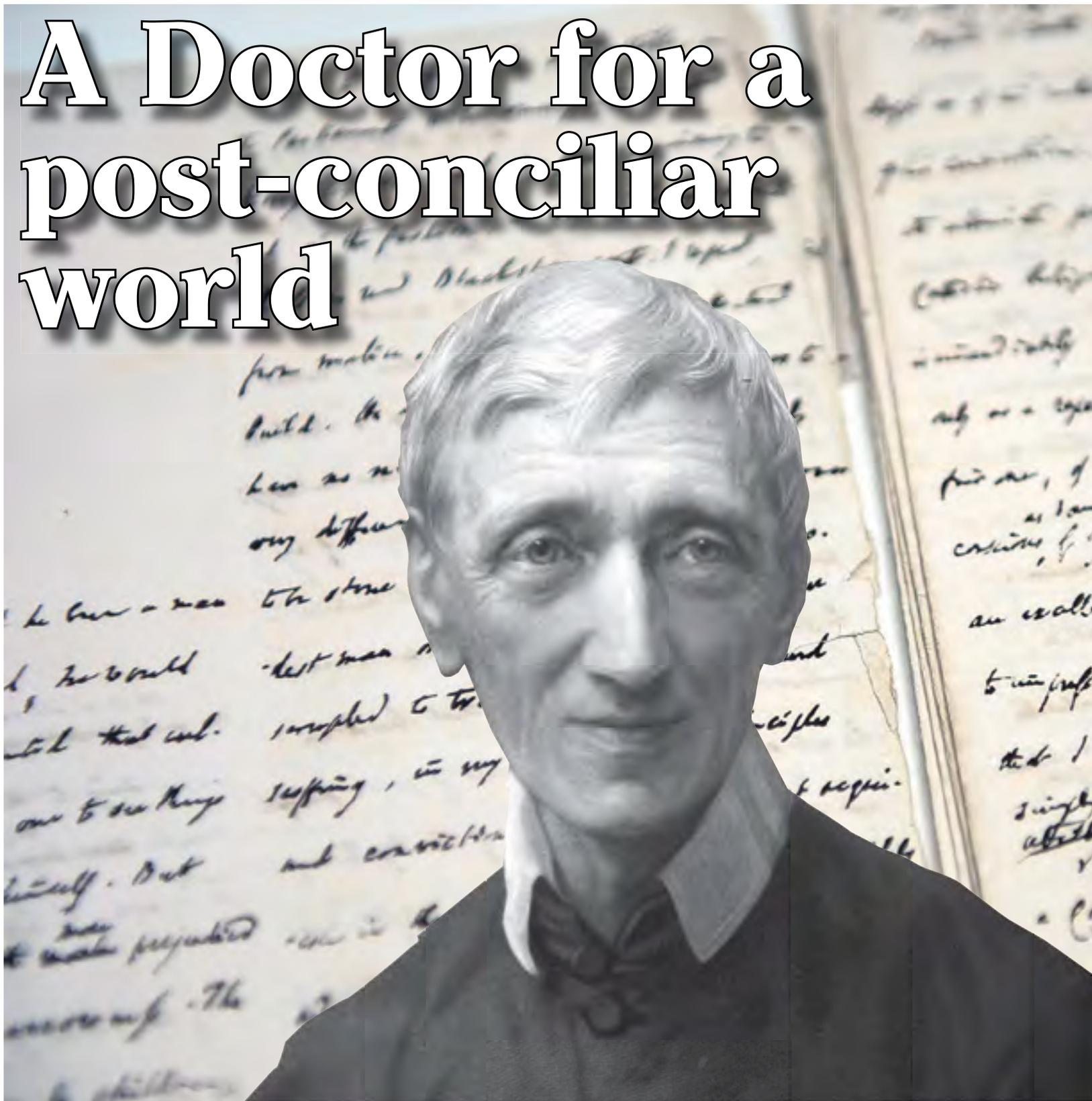
“We have found in your writings a never failing counsel and guidance...we can never forget that the Lectures on the Scope and Nature of University Education were delivered in our halls and by our Rector...the Catholics of this country having been for three centuries excluded from all share in the advantages of higher education, had no traditions to guide them in forming a correct estimate of what a University ought to be.

“Your great work, which, we may just call it Our Charter, have supplied the place of those traditions, and thanks to it, the Irish people have now realised what a true University should be...and what inestimable benefit could confer upon Ireland.”

i Prof. Emerita Teresa Iglesias is Founding Director of the International Centre for Newman Studies in UCD.

“Newman, whose primary duty was ‘obedience to conscience’, was confronted with an inner personal predicament of conscience that he needed to resolve”

A Doctor for a post-conciliar world



Newman's canonisation will allow the Church to shine a spotlight on his teaching, **Greg Daly** is told

God, as they say, moves in mysterious ways, and the path that led Fr Ian Ker to become the world's leading Newman scholar seems to have apparently random divine footprints all over it.

"It's all because the wife of a colleague left him," he says, explaining how he had been teaching at the University of York at the time, invited the colleague for dinner when they were both in London, and there been joined by an Italian academic who he eventually ended up driving to Oxford.

On the way there the Italian explained that he was working on a selection of Newman's works in Italian, and asked his English driver to do the notes on them.

"Well, only one volume ever came out but he suggested that I do them as an Oxford critical edition, and that was the beginning of the whole thing," Fr Ker says. "Otherwise I'd never have done it – I wouldn't be a priest either, probably!"

Sages

The reason the subject had come up, Fr Ker explains, as that he had been doing research on Victorian 'sages', people like Thomas Carlyle, and it struck him that Newman was much more intelligent than the others.

"My interest was primarily literary to begin with. When I had done this edition it occurred to me that there was a need for an intellectual and literary biography of Newman, because there really wasn't one," he says, with the upshot being the massively acclaimed 1988's *John Henry Newman: A Biography*.

"The book was a great success, so that's really what put me on the map," Fr Ker says, explaining that Newman's enduring fascination has a lot to do with his remarkable range as a writer.

"He wrote classic works in Theology – *The Development of Christian Doctrine*, in the philosophy of religion – *The Grammar of Assent*, in literature – the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*,

in education – *The Idea of a University* is still sort of a standard book that everyone refers to, and he wrote for Catholics on spirituality, and for Anglicans too," he says. "He had a very big field and wasn't just a theologian by any means."

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Newman's path in life was, of course, anything but straightforward, and sometimes offers salutary lessons for today's Catholics. It seems fitting that today's Catholic Voices movement, launched ahead of 2010's beatification of Newman, takes as a principle that crises offer opportunities to tell the truth of what the Church really teaches,

given how Newman's own spiritual biography, the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* was a response to criticisms by the Anglican priest-author Charles Kingsley who accused Newman of dishonesty.

"Newman was hugely grateful to Kingsley, because he enabled him to defend himself, and he said Mass for Kingsley when he died," Fr Ker says. "He was very, very grateful to Kingsley, because he'd been under attack for so many years, but this gave him the perfect opportunity to reply and tell the story of how he had grown in his understanding of Christian Faith.

"It was a very Protestant country at the time," he continues. "There's a wonderful story of him sitting on a train at Paddington

Station to go to Oxford, and he hears in the next compartment – the wall must have been rather thin – somebody saying 'depend upon it, sir – Newman is a Jesuit'. He was quite serious, and was probably an Oxford don, so the *Apologia* was designed to show that he exemplified precisely his theory of development of Christian doctrine. He hadn't abandoned his faith, but had moved through various stages and finally become a Catholic."

This notion that something can change while remaining true to itself was a key idea of Newman's, and something that has had a tremendous impact since, Fr Ker explains.

"It's the thing (Pope) Benedict

was often talking about, about change in continuity rather than change in rupture," he says. "Newman began as a Bible Protestant, then he had this Evangelical conversion, then he drifted directly – dangerously as he put it in the *Apologia* – in the direction of liberalism when he was elected to Oriel College."

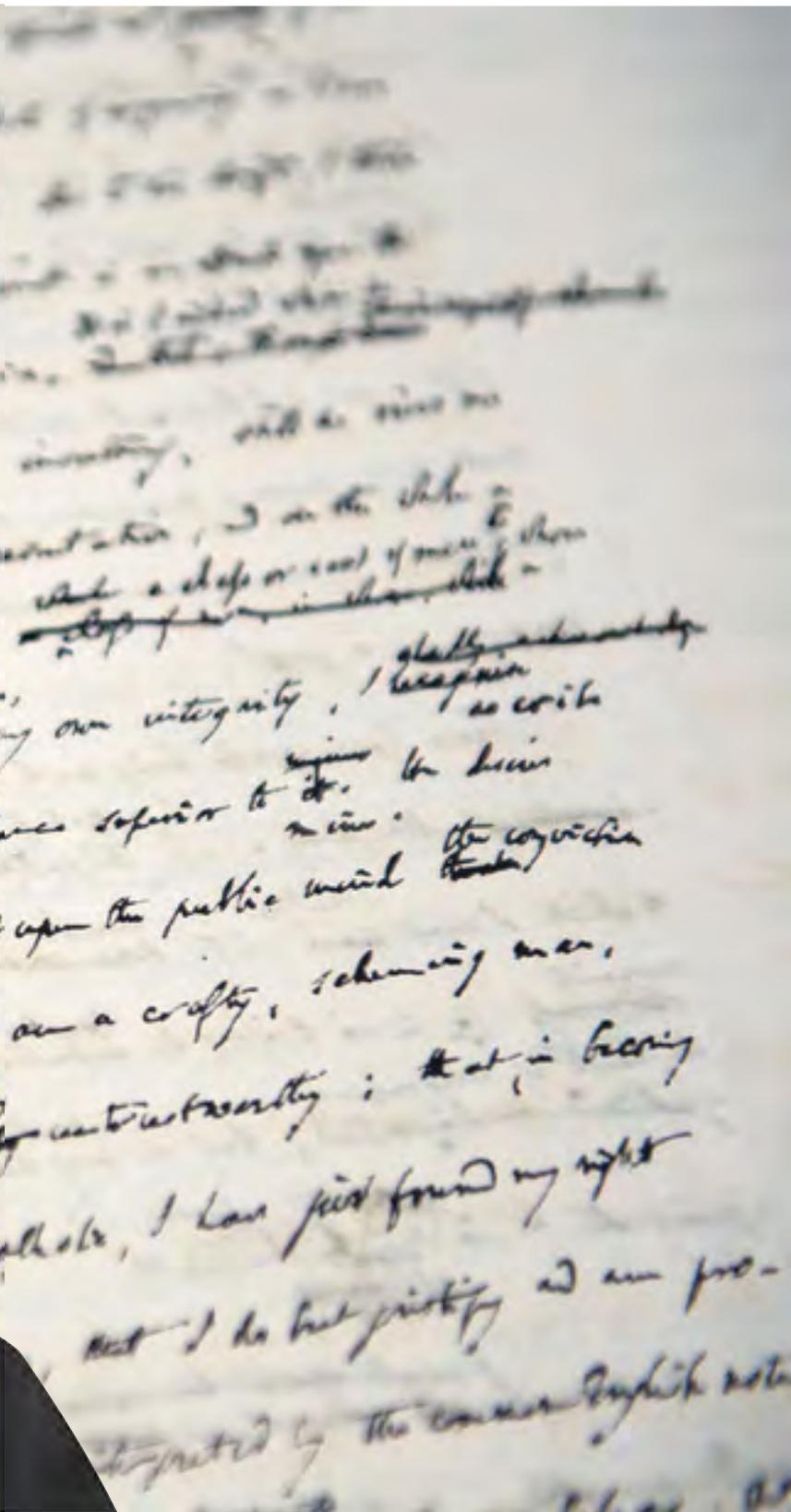
There he pioneered what's now known as the Oxford tutorial system, where students met with individual tutors on a one-on-one basis, Fr Ker says, rather than in classes of 15 or so students.

"If you wanted any private help you had to hire a graduate student, as Newman himself had done, and he thought that people shouldn't have to pay for private tuition but that tutoring should be done by the tutors," he says. "So he introduced a system with another three tutors. The provost thought it was a cult of personality, and so he was sacked."

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Without a teaching career, Newman became a fulltime

“There’s a wonderful story of him sitting on a train at Paddington Station to go to Oxford, and he hears in the next compartment – the wall must have been rather thin – somebody saying ‘depend upon it, sir – Newman is a Jesuit’. He was quite serious, and was probably an Oxford don”



clergyman had what Fr Ker describes as “a terrible shock”.

“He was studying the Monophysite heresy, which of course he knew all about already, when all of a sudden something struck him. He said ‘I saw my face in the mirror, and I had a Monophysite face’,” Fr Ker says. “He suddenly saw that the Monophysites had broken into two parties, the semi-Monophysites and extreme Monophysites, and Rome was on the other side.

“So this gave him a horrible shock, because this *via media* of which he was the theological architect, between Rome and Geneva, looked uncannily to him like the Monophysites, because you had the Protestants on the one hand who were the extreme Monophysites, and Rome on the other, and the Anglicans in the Middle,” he says, adding: “That was really what began it.”

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A second shock came when he realised how St Augustine had ultimately rejected claims by the North African Donatists on the basis of Rome’s authority. “Augustine made the point that it’s no good the Donatists making theological arguments for their position because Rome has decided and that is the end of it,” he says.

Yet another shock followed when his famous Tract 90, arguing for a Catholic interpretation of the Church of England’s 39 Articles – he said they criticised not Catholic doctrine but medieval errors and corruptions – was roundly condemned by university and episcopal authorities.

“What Newman wanted to do...was to combine the collegiate tutorial system of Oxford with the continental university system of lectures at, let’s say, Louvain”

“He was arguing that the bishops were the successors of the apostles, but these bishops were condemning him,” Fr Ker says.

“He became convinced that the modern Roman Catholic Church, however unlikely it might seem to the early Church, nevertheless was like looking at the photograph of a man in his 40s and then looking at the photograph of a boy aged 10 or 11 or whatever,” he continues. “You can see they’re the same person - much changed but still the same person. He thought that a living idea had to develop, and that there was only one church that had a mechanism for authenticating development, and there was only one church that

actually did develop doctrine.”

Seemingly faced with the inevitability of Rome’s claims, he worked over the following few years on his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, and on October 9, 1845 was received into the Catholic Church by a Passionist priest, Blessed Dominic Barberi, whose principal mission in England was to the poor of the industrial midlands.

Community

Ordained to the Catholic priesthood himself in 1847, Fr Newman joined St Philip Neri’s Congregation of the Oratory, and established an Oratorian community in Birmingham, a few years later being invited to Ireland to help found a Catholic university – the ultimate ancestor of today’s University College Dublin.

“When the opportunity came

the professorial element was very weak, and thought that it was important that the professors should give lectures, which they often didn’t bother to do in Oxford in those days.

“The colleges were much, much stronger than the university, and in Dublin he wanted the professors to run the university, not the heads of colleges. He reproduced the colleges in these hostels which were led by young priests,” he continues.

All of this makes it all the stranger that at the time of writing neither UCD nor the Irish Government is planning on sending anybody from Dublin to attend Newman’s canonisation, but this invites the obvious question of why Newman’s canonisation matters. As a ‘Blessed’ since 2010, he is already recognised, after all, as a saint in Heaven, enjoying the



Newman’s desk at Birmingham Oratory.

to found a Catholic university in Ireland, he jumped at it,” Fr Ker says. “It was a chance to found a Catholic university which he hoped would be a Catholic university for the English-speaking world. Irish Americans were very interested and would have been glad to go to Dublin. But when he went there he was advised by everyone that it really wasn’t viable.”

A key part of the problem, Fr Ker explains, is that the nascent university couldn’t grant degrees, with the Government of the day refusing to give the determinedly Catholic institution a charter to do so.

“And then of course he also had a lot of trouble from Archbishop Cullen,” Fr Ker continues. “It’s amazing to us today when under canon law every parish has to have a finance committee, but when he tried to set up a lay finance committee, Cullen absolutely forbade it. The Church was so clerical. And Newman couldn’t raise money for the university without a lay finance committee, with lay people involved in trying to get money.”

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Newman’s frustrated aim, Fr Ker says, was to blend the best features of the best of British and continental university education.

“What Newman wanted to do, and I think I’m the first person to point this out, was to combine the collegiate tutorial system of Oxford with the continental university system of lectures at, let’s say, Louvain. Because what he thought was wrong with Oxford was that

Beatific Vision.

“I think the important thing is that enables Newman to be declared a Doctor of the Church, because you can’t be one without being a canonised saint,” Fr Ker says. “I regard him as a Doctor of the Church for the post-conciliar period, and I’ve argued this in my last book, *Newman on Vatican II*. I think he can be seen as a Doctor of the Church for our period like St Robert Bellarmine was a Doctor of the Church for the Tridentine Period.”

Traces

Traces of Newman’s influence can be spotted in such Council documents as *Dignitatis Humanae* on religious freedom and *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church, Fr Ker says, though he concedes that Newman’s influence is only indisputable in one.

“The only specific reference to Newman in the Council documents is in the Constitution on Divine Revelation, where the development of doctrine is referred to,” he says. “That probably was put in by Yves Congar, because Newman anticipated by 100 years in their emphasis on the library of the Fathers what the French would do 100 years later when Daniélou and de Lubac began the Sources Chrétienne, the so-called Ressourcement movement from Scriptures and the Fathers.

“And without that theology,” he says, “Vatican II couldn’t possibly have taken place.”

research fellow, Fr Ker says, with this transforming him.

“That’s when he really began systematically to read the Fathers,” he says. “He used to say that it was Oxford made him Catholic, meaning that it was there he read the Fathers and it was the Fathers who brought him into the Catholic Church.”

This didn’t happen overnight, of course, as Newman would first play a leading role in the Church of England’s so-called Oxford Movement, which began in 1833 with concerns about State intervention in Church affairs and tried to grapple with the nature of the Church.

“Originally there was a meeting up in Hadleigh in Suffolk, and the original people who wanted to protest against the government’s intervention wanted to set up a committee,” Fr Ker says. “In his *Apologia*, of course, Newman said living movements do not come of committees. He was completely against the idea of a clerical committee and he began then the

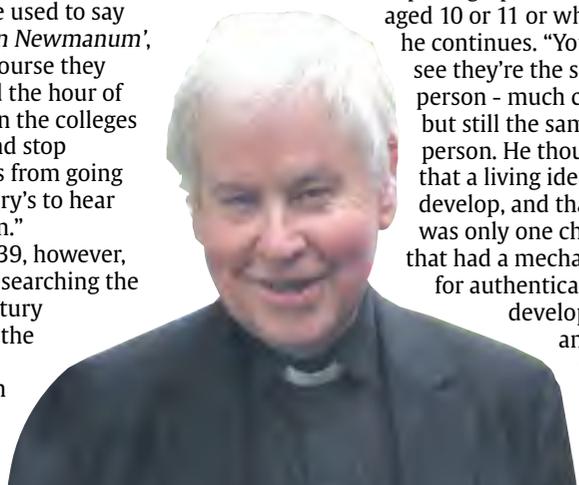
Tracts for the Times. It was rather like a modern ecclesial movement in the Catholic Church because it included both laypeople and clergy.”

Through the Tracts, a series of 90 publications, many of which he wrote, Newman became a household name.

“He was effectively the leader of the Oxford movement, through the tracts and through his preaching at St Mary’s which was famous – people used to say ‘Credo in Newmanum’, and of course they changed the hour of dinner in the colleges to try and stop students from going to St Mary’s to hear Newman.”

In 1839, however, when researching the 5th-Century Church, the then Anglican

Fr Ian Ker.





Newman

...in his
own
words...

“ **I am created** to do something or to be something for which no one else is created; I have a place in God’s counsels, in God’s world, which no one else has; whether I be rich or poor, despised or esteemed by man, God knows me and calls me by my name.

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission—I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. Somehow I am necessary for His purposes, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in his—if, indeed, I fail, He can raise another, as He could make the stones children of Abraham. Yet I have a part in this great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connexion between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work; I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My sickness, or perplexity, or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain; He may prolong my life, He may shorten it; He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends, He may throw me among strangers, He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide the future from me—still He knows what He is about.

– *Meditations and Devotions*

“ **God has created** all things for good; all things for their greatest good; everything for its own good. What is the good of one is not the good of another; what makes one man happy would make another unhappy.

God has determined, unless I interfere with His plan, that I should reach that which will be my greatest happiness. He looks on me individually, He calls me by my name, He knows what I can do, what I can best be, what is my greatest happiness, and He means to give it me.

God knows what is my greatest happiness, but I do not. There is no rule about what is happy and good; what suits one would not suit another. And the ways by which perfection is reached vary very much; the medicines necessary for our souls are very different from each other. Thus God leads us by strange ways; we know He wills our happiness, but we neither know what our happiness is, nor the way. We are blind; left to ourselves we should take the wrong way; we must leave it to Him.

Let us put ourselves into His hands, and not be startled though He leads us by a strange way, a *mirabilis via*, as the Church speaks. Let us be sure He will lead us right, that He will bring us to that which is, not indeed what we think best, nor what is best for another, but what is best for us.

– *Meditations and Devotions*

“ **What I desiderate** in Catholics is the gift of bringing out what their religion is – I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it.

I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity – I wish you to enlarge your knowledge, to cultivate your reason, to get an insight into the relation of truth to truth, to learn to view things as they are, to understand how faith and reason stand to each other, what are the bases and principles of Catholicism and where lies the main inconsistencies and absurdities of the Protestant theory.

I have no apprehension you will be the worse Catholics for familiarity with these subjects, provided you cherish a vivid sense of God above and keep in mind that you have souls to be judged and saved. In all times the laity have been the measure of the Catholic spirit; they saved the Irish Church three centuries ago and they betrayed the Church in England.

You ought to be able to bring out what you feel and what you mean, as well as to feel and mean it; to expose to the comprehension of others the fictions and fallacies of your opponents; to explain the charges brought against the Church, to the satisfaction, not, indeed, of bigots, but of men of sense, of whatever cast of opinion.

– *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*

“It is enough, that this age has its principles too; this does not prove them true; it has no right to put ours on one side, and proceed to make its own the immediate touchstones and the sufficient tribunals of our creed, our worship, our ecclesiastical proceedings, and our moral teaching.”

– *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*

“ **Drill-sergeants think much of** deportment; hard logicians come down with a sledge-hammer even on a Plato who does not happen to enumerate in his beautiful sentences all the argumentative considerations which go to make up his conclusions; scholars are horrified, as if with sensible pain, at the perpetration of a false quantity. I am far from ridiculing, despising, or even undervaluing such precision; it is for the good of every art and science that it should have vigilant guardians.

Nor am I comparing such precision (far from it) with that true religious zeal which leads theologians to keep the sacred Ark of the Covenant in every letter of its dogma, as a tremendous deposit for which they are responsible. In this curious sceptical world, such sensitiveness is the only human means by which the treasure of faith can be kept inviolate. There is a woe in Scripture against the unfaithful shepherd. We do not blame the watch-dog because he sometimes flies at the wrong person.

I conceive the force, the peremptoriness, the sternness, with which the Holy See comes down upon the vagrant or the robber, trespassing upon the enclosure of revealed truth, is the only sufficient antagonist to the power and subtlety of the world, to imperial comprehensiveness, monarchical selfishness, nationalism, the liberalism of philosophy, the encroachments and usurpation of science.

– *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*

“The heart is commonly reached, not through the reason, but through the imagination, by means of direct impressions, by the testimony of facts and events, by history, by description. Persons influence us, voices melt us, looks subdue us, deeds inflame us. Many a man will live and die upon a dogma: no man will be a martyr for a conclusion.”

– Secular Knowledge not a Principle of Action

“So much for philosophers; now let us see what is the notion of conscience in this day in the popular mind.

There, no more than in the intellectual world, does ‘conscience’ retain the old, true, Catholic meaning of the word. There too the idea, the presence of a Moral Governor is far away from the use of it, frequent and emphatic as that use of it is. When men advocate the rights of conscience, they in no sense mean the rights of the Creator, nor the duty to Him, in thought and deed, of the creature; but the right of thinking, speaking,

writing, and acting, according to their judgment or their humour, without any thought of God at all.

They do not even pretend to go by any moral rule, but they demand, what they think is an Englishman’s prerogative, for each to be his own master in all things, and to profess what he pleases, asking no one’s leave, and accounting priest or preacher, speaker or writer, unutterably impertinent, who dares to say a word against his going to perdition, if he like it, in his own way.

Conscience has rights because it has duties; but in this age, with a large portion of the public, it is the very right and freedom

of conscience to dispense with conscience, to ignore a Lawgiver and Judge, to be independent of unseen obligations. It becomes a licence to take up any or no religion, to take up this or that and let it go again, to go to church, to go to chapel, to boast of being above all religions and to be an impartial critic of each of them.

Conscience is a stern monitor, but in this century it has been superseded by a counterfeit, which the 18 centuries prior to it never heard of, and could not have mistaken for it, if they had. It is the right of self-will.

– A Letter Addressed to the Duke of Norfolk

“What is meditating on Christ? It is simply this, thinking habitually and constantly of Him and of His deeds and sufferings. It is to have Him before our minds as One whom we may contemplate, worship, and address when we rise up, when we lie down, when we eat and drink, when we are at home and abroad, when we are working, or walking, or at rest, when we are alone, and again when we are in company; this is meditating.

And by this, and nothing short of this, will our hearts come to feel as they ought. We have stony hearts, hearts as hard as the highways; the history of Christ makes no impression on them. And yet, if we would be saved, we must have tender, sensitive, living hearts; our hearts must be broken, must be broken up like ground, and dug, and watered, and tilled, and cultivated, till they become as gardens, gardens of Eden, acceptable to our God, gardens in which the Lord God may walk and dwell; filled, not with briars and thorns, but with all sweet-smelling and useful plants, with heavenly trees and flowers. The dry and barren waste must burst forth into springs of living water.

This change must take place in our hearts if we would be saved; in a word, we must have what we have not by nature, faith and love; and how is this to be effected, under God’s grace, but by godly and practical meditation through the day?

– Meditations and Devotions

“It is indeed, sometimes said that the stream is clearest near the spring. Whatever use may fairly be made of this image, it does not apply to the history of a philosophy or belief, which on the contrary is more equable, and purer, and stronger, when its bed has become deep, and broad, and full. It necessarily rises out of an existing state of things, and for a time savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary.’

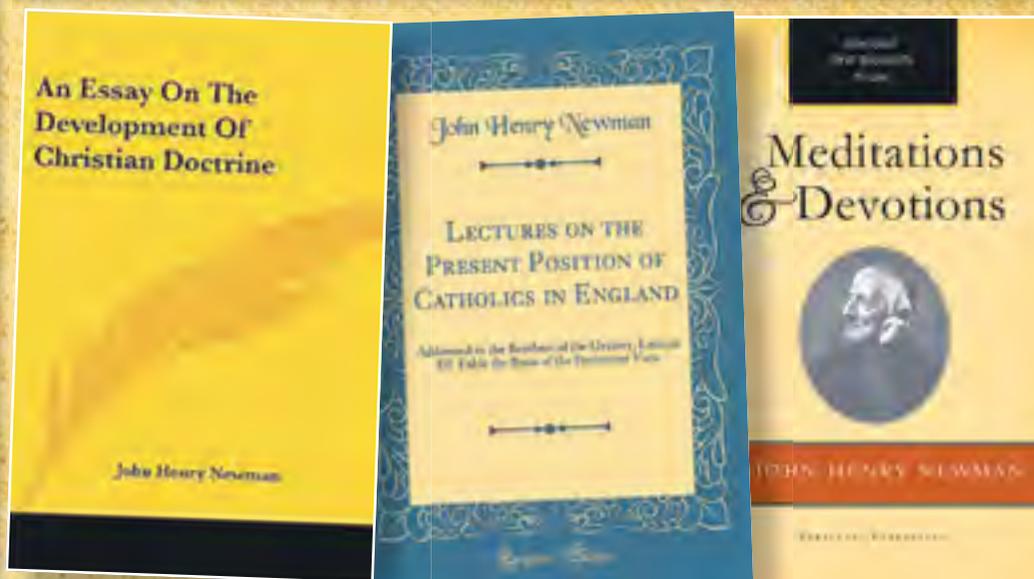
From time to time it makes essays which fail and are in consequence abandoned. It seems in suspense which way to go; it wavers, and at length strikes out in one definite direction. In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing; parties rise and fall around it; dangers and hopes appear in new relations; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.

– An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine

“Where you see prejudice, there, indeed, it is no use to argue; prejudice thinks its first principles self-evident. It can tell falsehoods to our dishonour by the score, yet suddenly it is so jealous of truth, as to be shocked at legends in honour of the saints. With prejudiced persons then,

you will make no way; they will not look the question in the face; if they condescend to listen for a moment to your arguments it is in order to pick holes in them, not to ascertain their drift or to estimate their weight.

– Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England



“O My God, I confess that Thou canst enlighten my darkness. I confess that Thou alone canst. I wish my darkness to be enlightened. I do not know whether Thou wilt: but that Thou canst and that I wish, are sufficient reasons for me to ask, what Thou at least hast not forbidden my asking.

I hereby promise that by Thy grace which I am asking, I will embrace whatever I at length feel certain is the truth, if ever I come to be certain. And by Thy grace I will guard against all self-deceit which may lead me to take what nature would have, rather than what reason approves.

– Meditations and Devotions

“After a great deal of trouble, after writing about to friends, consulting libraries, and comparing statements, let us suppose [a Catholic can] prove most conclusively the utter absurdity of [some] slanderous story, and to bring out a lucid, powerful, and unanswerable reply; who cares for it by that time? who cares for the story itself?

It has done its work; time stops for no man; it has created or deepened the impression in the minds of its hearers that a monk commits murder or adultery as readily as he eats his dinner. Men forget the process by which they receive it, but there it is, clear and indelible.

Or supposing they recollect the particular slander ever so well, still they have no taste or stomach for entering into a long controversy about it; their mind is already made up; they have formed their views; the author they have trusted may, indeed, have been inaccurate in some of his details; it can be nothing more.

Who can fairly impose on them the perplexity and whirl of going through a bout of controversy, where “one says,” and “the other says,” and “he says that he says that he does not say or ought not to say what he does say or ought to say?” It demands an effort and strain of attention which they have no sort of purpose of bestowing.

– Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England

A model of Faith

A model of Reason



Newman's legacy is alive and well at Dublin's University Church, writes Fr Bill Dailey

I can recall vividly the time that I visited Assisi: I knew from my first steps in the city that I was walking in a place where undeniably holy people – towering saints, Francis and Clare – had walked. Many pilgrims have had a similar sense of awe and otherness overtake them there.

When I first visited the tomb of St Andre Bessette, CSC, at the Oratory of St Joseph in Montreal, I was similarly struck by the holy silence and the palpable reality that a true saint had built that magnificent church, had healed and counselled there, and was there with us still.

Today each day I am privileged to pray – in silence and with others, in a beautiful church in the heart of Dublin that was built by a great saint for today – a great saint for Dublin – John Henry Newman. It's an incredible and undeserved gift to be able to minister and preach in his Church, a place where so many in Ireland have been baptised and wed, and where so many will now come to encounter what was undoubtedly the home of a great saint.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has long been fond of Newman and of Newman's Church in Dublin, and with great foresight he took a bold step to honour the great priest and theologian's legacy here in Dublin when he sought to establish a Centre for Faith & Reason in Newman's University Church, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom, on St Stephen's Green. I'm most fortunate that his vision included the University of Notre Dame, based in South Bend, Indiana, who saw fit to send me to accept his invitation and take up this exciting work.

It's worth recalling Dr Martin's words at the time: "I see the establishment of the Notre Dame-Newman Centre for Faith and Reason as an opportunity for University Church to return to its



original vocation as a focal point for reflection on Faith and reason. Dublin can take a new lead in today's changed social context in something which is part of the rich heritage of Newman's presence in Dublin. I appreciate especially that the centre will not be just an intellectual debating centre, but will also work in the formation of an active and committed Faith community of young professionals."

Anniversary

I write on the eve of the third anniversary of our arrival in Dublin. I came to Dublin with my colleague Steve Warner – a brilliant musician – and his wife Michele, and we travelled with enthusiasm but some trepidation about what we could encounter.

Regular readers of *The Irish Catholic* will be well familiar with the state of the Catholic Faith in Ireland today, especially with the challenging cultural headwinds and the need to rebuild credibility in an institution that has too often worked in ways that broke Faith with the faithful.

We had some knowledge of that situation, of course, and intimate knowledge of our limitations, hopeful about joining in the mission here but cautious not to claim to have answers to every question and solutions to every problem. What we brought was gratitude as Americans for the great gifts Ireland has given to the American Church, and gratitude that we had been invited back to join in this new evangelisation.

We were determined to start

slowly, simply celebrating the sacraments as best we could, getting to know the people and letting them get to know us, and learning what we could about Blessed John Henry Newman from his writings, his architecture, and the many friends of John Henry Newman who regularly visit our Church.

Vision

We knew and we know that our work in his Church must be an outgrowth of his efforts, building on his vision of a Faith rooted in prayer, in friendship with Christ, and in reasoned reflection on the Catholic tradition.

From time to time when we tell people we work in a centre for "Faith and reason" they ask "isn't that a contradiction in

terms?" They are half joking, in my experience – but only half. (I used to teach legal ethics, so I am familiar with the dynamic!). To understand what Newman meant by faith and reason is quickly to see that the half-joking question reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of faith, which properly understood is something all reasonable people possess and act upon every day.

The joke depends upon seeing faith as precisely something beyond reason – before it begins or after it ends – like finding God in the gaps of science or a lucky rabbit's foot we bring to a test when we've run out of time to prepare. It's Faith as superstition or fantasy, the very opposite of science and reason – the opposite of what is modern, sensible, or trustworthy.

But that last word, trustworthiness, offers a key to understanding why a Centre for Faith & Reason is eminently reasonable, and is most fittingly based in this church built by John Henry Newman. As he preached

“I see the establishment of the Notre Dame-Newman Centre for Faith and Reason as an opportunity for University Church to return to its original vocation as a focal point for reflection on Faith and reason...”



Fr Dailey introduces Patrick Cassidy's inaugural performance of the Mass at the Notre Dame Newman Centre for Faith and Reason. Photo: John McElroy



Rod Dreher addresses the audience at the Newman Centre in Dublin.

in his sermon 'Religious Faith Rational':

"To hear some men speak (I mean men who scoff at religion), it might be thought we never acted on Faith or Trust, except in religious matters; whereas we are acting on trust every hour of our lives. When faith is said to be a religious principle, it is (I repeat) the things believed, not the act of believing them, which is peculiar to religion. Let us take some examples.

“As Newman further notes, we trust our memory and our doctors and our airlines, in reason itself, ‘though they often deceive us’”

"It is obvious that we trust to our memory. We do not now witness what we saw yesterday; yet we have no doubt it took place in the way we remember. We recollect clearly the circumstances of morning and afternoon. Our confidence in our memory is so

strong that a man might reason with us all day long, without persuading us that we slept through the day, or that we returned from a long journey, when our memory deposes otherwise. Thus we have faith in our memory; yet what is irrational here?"

Here we see that Faith is something we all have and all act upon – besides Newman's excellent example of faith in memory, there are many others. We put faith in science: we trust that our doctor is giving us good advice, that the diplomas on her wall give us reliable assurance of the care we will receive. We put trust in the people who prepare our food, the people who build and maintain airplanes and cars. We don't have time or capacity to check their work, but we trust, using our reason, that we may follow their lead without sure knowledge.

And as Newman further notes, we trust our memory and our doctors and our airlines, in reason itself, "though they often deceive us". So putting Faith in religion isn't unreasonable because it is putting

trust in something that is less than certain – for this is something reasonable people do every day in so many ways, including trusting the reason itself.

Newman says that the trust of faith is a "reliance on the words of another, as opposed to trust in oneself." Who are the others upon whom we rely in our religious Faith?

The answer goes back of course to the apostles and martyrs who first spent their lives in service of others to introduce them to Jesus the Christ – being willing to die to spread the Faith, not to kill for it. That's a pretty good indicator of a person's trustworthiness – selfless sacrifice to share what they have seen and known of love and mercy so that others may see and know it as well.

But there have been many others since, and their testimony is varied and often glorious: great saints who loved the poor; great architects and artists who captured beauty and compassion in sight and song; very often our own parents and grandparents whose tenderness we can never account for as merely transactional. These latter cases make clear our own experience of living the Faith flows from and reinforces that initial reliance.

When we reflect on Faith in this way, we begin to see that when the Church has failed us, it has done so not by being what it asks us to trust but by betraying it.

As one wag put it on Twitter recently, "we don't stop believing in Jesus because we encounter Judas".



Newman, by clearly demonstrating that reasonable people reasonably live by faith and not by sight or certainty in their ordinary everyday lives quite apart from religion gives us a sensible understanding of faith as an equally reasonable activity – trusting in the parents who handed it on to us, going back in a chain through time to the apostles who met the One who would change their lives, the one of whom the Roman Centurion said, seeing the truth of his love on the Cross "surely this one is the son of God".

If we free ourselves from the false fear that reasonable people are those who only act on certainty, we can confidently relax that our parents and grandparents were not fools who just needed to pay more attention to the STEM disciplines in school rather than bother about this Jesus.

Newman is an ideal and much-needed saint, therefore, for a sceptical age, for he penetrates in plain and persuasive preaching the pretensions of our time.

Spirit

It is in this spirit then that we've set about to make Newman's University Church a place for people open to trust in the Lord, and into the testimony we have received about him, as they are willing to trust AIB or Bank of Ireland with their hard earned income, trust the air traffic controllers at the airport, or trust



Inside the church.

their own memory or powers of reason.

It's possible for us to be mistaken about those forms of trust on any given day, but it's reasonable to think that for what's right in front of me at the moment, I will act on trust and trust in the testimony of the saints is trust that a life lived for others will in fact deepen and enrich my life. So we try to build liturgies and preaching (for we are first of all a house of worship) that will help us to reflect upon that gospel of life and mercy with beauty and sophistication.

To this end we've added an evening mass and started a remarkably talented choir of young people, the Vocare Ensemble, directed by Steve Warner. They have recorded an album already and will be touring the US next summer. They enrich that evening Mass which is small but growing steadily and includes a large number of regular attendees just out of college or already in the professions. We have doctors and lawyers and philosophers who knew their way around the Leaving Cert but also know that what is written on our hearts will not in fact show up on an ECG.

We've also had evenings of poetry and music featuring poets such as Heaney and Kavanagh, reflections on ethical entrepreneurship, discussions on women in the Church and on the plight of migrants, panel discussions on the future of Catholic Schools and the future of the pro-life movement in Ireland.

“Newman's plan for a university recognised the independent integrity of various disciplines as part of a unified whole where integrity is found in the pursuit of truth”

In all of these we've welcomed respectful disagreement in an atmosphere proper to a University in Newman's vision: a place that believes in the vindication of reason and the fearless pursuit of truth where theology has a place but where other disciplines have their own history and practices and standards that are not simply to be determined by "father knows best". Rather, Newman's plan for

a university recognised the independent integrity of various disciplines as part of a unified whole where integrity is found in the pursuit of truth. In this way the University is intended to prepare us for the next life, not the next job.

We welcome people to Newman Church to "come and see", in worship, in discussion of discrete topics that are timely but touch upon timeless themes, because little there is in the depths of human affairs that does not test or move our conscience, that surest evidence of God in our experience, what Newman calls "God's voice in our hearts", a gift "to balance the influence of sight and reason".

Moved

We've been moved to hear from people that they had been away from the Church for a while and have found in our various ministries aided by so many Irish friends and collaborators a reason to return to the Faith of their baptism. One young college student came to me recently saying: "I heard you invited a group of us to your Church two years ago, and laughed to myself that nobody would come. But here I am."

We're truly just getting started, and doing our best each day to think of creative ways to engage that voice within that calls something further from us than the economy does, the voice that calls us to be good friends, good husbands and wives, good parents and good children, that reminds us to be kind to the stranger and to forgive as we would be forgiven.

This voice, as we have seen, is placed in us alongside reason, alongside sight and hearing and memory, and may just as reasonably be attended to as all of them. Indeed, most of us have enough experience to know that failure to heed that voice, that capacity, can lead us (and those around us) into injury and even despair. It is not reasonable to court despair, and here we see that even hope itself (which is not merely blind optimism any more than Faith is like a rabbit's foot) is reasonable.

We hope you'll join us soon.

📍 Fr Bill Dailey CSC is director of the Newman Centre for Faith and Reason.

A discouraging beginning which suggested so little of what was yet to come



St John Henry Newman's first Catholic sermon was in a celebrated Irish church in Rome, writes **Fr Mícheál MacCraith**

As the date for Blessed John Henry Newman's canonisation on October 13 draws near, it is opportune to recall that he preached his first sermon as a Roman Catholic in the Irish Franciscan Church of S. Isidoro in Rome.

The future saint was received into the Roman Catholic church on October 9, 1845. While convinced of the validity of his Anglican orders, he felt it would be more prudent to remain as a Catholic layman, but Bishop Nicholas Wiseman, president of Oscott College, persuaded him to seek ordination to the Catholic priesthood. Accompanied by his friend Ambrose St John, Newman arrived in Rome at the end of October 1846 to take up residence at the College of Propaganda.

A tragic death that occurred in the eternal city just over a month later provided the occasion for Newman's first sermon. The circumstances were recorded by Francis Mahony, Roman correspondent for the Daily News from 1846 to 1858.

'Suffered to attend'

Better known under his pseudonym 'Father Prout' for his song *The Bells of Shandon*, Mahony's report for December 3, 1846 reads as follows:

"I regret to find, that among other frivolities which occupy the leisure of the Palazzo Borghese, homoeopathy is now paramount, and through female influence this nonsense has become positively mischievous. Last March the duchess of Piombino was a victim, and this week a lovely daughter of Colonel Bryan, of Kilkenny, died under this treatment, none of the many English physicians resident here having been suffered to attend. She had arrived here a few weeks before in perfect health."

The young lady in question was Octavia Catherine Mary Bryan, the fifth of six daughters



The Irish Franciscan Church of S. Isidoro in Rome.

born to Colonel George Bryan of Jenkinstown, Co. Kilkenny and Margaret Talbot of Castle Talbot, Co. Wexford.

George and Margaret spent much of their married life from the early 1820s on the continent, and Octavia Catherine Mary was born in Rome on February 6,

1827. Her maternal aunt, Mary Theresa Talbot, was the Countess of Shrewsbury and her mother, renowned for her beauty and wit, was very much at home in Roman society, making friends with both Pius IX and Pauline Bonaparte.

Octavia was betrothed to Prince Scipio Borghese, a scion of one of

the noblest families of Rome. The wedding was due to take place on December 4, 1846, but the young woman just three days before her scheduled nuptials succumbed to the illness referred to above.

Mahony's report added further details:

"The solemn dirge and requiem

held over the poor lady in the church of Irish Franciscans, St Isidoro, was attended by several hundred British visitors, besides the young lady's kinsfolk, of the princely houses of Doria, Pamphili, and Borghese. Towards the termination of the sorrowful ceremony, at a pause in the liturgy, there arose in the body of the church a person in ecclesiastical costume, of pensive and areworn aspect, who standing near the coffin, addressed himself to speak.

"His voice was low at first, so that few heard till it gradually filled the church, and it was understood to be a simple recital of the unostentatious virtues of the deceased; but soon came words of impressive import, and a whisper went round that the unexpected speaker on the occasion was the Rev. Mr Newman, late of Oxford.

"To the thousands who have perused his printed sermons delivered in Anglican pulpits, it would be difficult to convey a notion of his manner on the present occasion, it being the first time that he delivered himself of an extemporaneous unpremeditated discourse. But as a letter to you is no proper vehicle for theological comments, I add no more."

“He thought that Newman could exploit the young lady's sudden death to convince the number of English Protestants who would be present at the funeral of the necessity of becoming Catholics before it was too late”

Poor Octavia's obsequies were overshadowed by the fact that the preacher was none other than John Henry Newman. Prince Marcantonio Borghese, head of the Borghese family, approached Newman the night before the funeral and begged him to preach the following day.

Marcantonio's first wife, Gwendoline Talbot, who died from scarlet fever in 1840 at the tender age of 22, was known in Rome as the mother of the poor because of her prodigious charitable works



An image of a young John Henry Newman.

on their behalf. As Gwendoline was both a younger daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, one of England's leading Catholic peers, and a cousin of Octavia, Prince Borghese shrewdly emphasised the double Shrewsbury connection in his attempts to cajole the new convert.

Furthermore, he thought that Newman could exploit the young lady's sudden death to convince the number of English Protestants who would be present at the funeral of the necessity of becoming Catholics before it was too late.

Horrified at the prince's reasoning, Newman explained that as a student for the priesthood, he was not yet licensed to preach. Prince Borghese retorted that he has already spoken with the Vatican authorities and had gained the necessary permission. Newman then ventured that the Anglican style of reading a sermon would hold little appeal for an Italian audience. Despite the cleric's best efforts to escape this difficult task, however, the prince remained obdurate, and eventually Newman had no option but to yield to Borghese's persistence.

Ambrose St John, Newman's close friend, gave further details of the sermon in a letter to J. B. Dalgairns, a mutual companion who also converted from Anglicanism and was ordained to the priesthood in 1846. After addressing the Catholics in the congregation, Newman turned his attention to the Protestants present, making the point that all

that was lacking in the sterling Anglo-Saxon character was the Catholic faith:

"As you may guess, those who did like it liked it very much – as the Princess Aldo Brandini, a half-sister of Prince Borghese, who himself with others of his family could not follow the English. But the majority, including many old staging Catholics, who brought Protestant friends to hear the music, were disgusted to see their friends whipped before their faces. And still more the Protestants who heard the account from their brother Protestants (whose sole idea seems to be that Newman has called them all brutes and dogs etc.) became quite rabid; and the disease, propagated at balls and parties, has spread among Protestants and partly even amongst Catholics to an amazing extent."

Newman just recorded the fact that he gave this sermon in his diary for December 4, 1846, but he was much more explicit in a letter to Dalgairns four days later:

"Last Friday I had a few hours notice to preach extempore a funeral sermon on a young Irish lady here, a niece of Lady Shrewsbury's at St Isidore's the Irish Franciscan Church. I assure you, I did not like it at all."

He was even more forthcoming in a letter addressed to Mrs. J. W. Bowden on January 13, 1847:

"An occurrence happened which I do not know how to be sorry for, nor can blame myself about, which has been somewhat untoward. A young Catholic lady

here died suddenly, a near relative of Lord Shrewsbury, and the prince Borghese came to me one night and asked me earnestly to preach her funeral sermon next day ...that, considering she was Lord Shrewsbury's niece, I thought I could not graciously deny him.

"You may think how great a trouble it was to me to preach ex tempore, when I had been at Rome hardly a month, at a few hours notice, upon the death of a lady of whom I knew nothing. Well, I gained no thanks from the relatives of Catholics, and much ill will from Protestants and many Catholics too.

“Still more the Protestants who heard the account from their brother Protestants ...became quite rabid”

"Prince B[orghese] had wished me to try to do some good to the Protestants present, – and I preached a sermon in my own way, which was quite a novelty, and not a pleasing one, here. The Catholics who are used to the fluency of the Italians did not understand my manner, and the Protestants, who came for the music or from respect to the family, did not relish receiving a lecture.

"And when they went away and told others, the story was made worse and anger excited greater, on each successive tradition.

"At length the Protestant world

got into a regular fury, and Miss Ryder heard a man express the sentiment in a party, that I ought to be thrown into the Tyber."

* * * * *

William Anthony Doyle, one of the students of St Isidore's, was present at Octavia Bryan's funeral service and referred to Newman's sermon in a letter to one of his uncles in Wexford friary, Richard Worthington OFM, dated January 17, 1847:

"The celebrated Dr Newman preached a funeral sermon in St Isidore's for Miss Bryan who is buried in the church where the confessional was and where a monument is intended to be erected. Newman's sermon was the most ridiculous one I ever heard and gave great offence to the Protestants present, but this is entre nous."

Reports of the debacle soon reached the ears of the Pope himself. Having expressed the desire to see Newman again and again after his first encounter with him in Rome, Pope Pius IX now temporarily lost all desire to have anything to do with him.

* * * * *

While the brouhaha kindled by Newman's sermon tended to overshadow the tragic death of young Octavia, the poignancy of the occasion was well captured by her funeral monument, sculpted by Vincenzo Gajassi in 1848, and occupying the top left hand corner of St Isidore's.

One of the foremost sculptors

of his age, Gajassi's work depicted the supine figure of a young woman on a sarcophagus, lying from left to right. Her veiled head, crowned with a garland of roses, reposes on two cushions, the veil reaching down as far as the feet.

The lady's arms are folded across her breast, with a crucifix placed between them. With the veil and crown of roses implying the notion of a bridal dress, the whole scene conveys an Ophelia-like impression that arouses the sympathy of visitors to St Isidore's even to this day.

The artist signed his work 'V. Gajassi Sculpt' just underneath the lower cushion. The base of the sarcophagus carries a simple Latin inscription, flanked by the coat of arms of the Talbots of Wexford on the left, and that of the Talbots of Shrewsbury on the right.

While Gajassi's monument remains a fitting tribute to the untimely demise of the young Irishwoman on the eve of her nuptials, Newman's faltering words were totally inadequate for the occasion. Perhaps it is just as well that his sermon has not survived.

Both as an Anglican and as a Catholic, the Englishman was no stranger to controversy. Although not deliberately courting hostility, the polemics occasioned by his writings stemmed rather from his searing honesty and fidelity to conscience.

The affray occasioned by his debut sermon in S. Isidoro, however, was of a totally different kind and not of Newman's volition. None of those present at Ottavia's obsequies could have harboured the faintest suspicion that the preacher would one day be raised to the ranks of canonised saints.

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“While Gajassi's monument remains a fitting tribute to the untimely demise of the young Irishwoman on the eve of her nuptials, Newman's faltering words were totally inadequate for the occasion”

120 years a-growing – how the

St John Henry Newman was in many ways the first father of the second Vatican council, writes **Greg Daly**



It could credibly be argued that the first seeds of the Second Vatican Council were sown on February 2, 1843, when the then-Anglican John Henry Newman preached a sermon in Oxford under the title of ‘The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine’.

Taking as his text Luke 2:19: “As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart,” Newman argued that a truly Christian faith is a Marian faith, not merely accepting what has been revealed, but reflecting upon it, using it, developing it, reasoning on it. Describing as “wonderful” the development and growth of the Christian mind, the future saint said:

“And this world of thought is the expansion of a few words, uttered, as if casually, by the fishermen of Galilee...reason has not only submitted, it has ministered to Faith; it has illustrated its documents; it has raised illiterate peasants into philosophers and divines; it has elicited a meaning from their words which their immediate hearers little suspected...its half sentences, its overflowings of language, admit of development; they have a life in them which shows itself in progress; a truth, which has the token of consistency; a reality, which is fruitful in resources; a depth, which extends into mystery; for they are representations of what is actual, and has a definite location and necessary bearings and a meaning in the great system of things, and a harmony in what it is, and a compatibility in what it involves.”

Principles

Drawing on an earlier distinction between what he deemed “explicit” and “implicit” reason, Newman argued that Revelation impresses certain supernatural facts or principles on the minds of those to whom truth is revealed, holding that those upon whose minds these supernatural realities had been impressed could be unaware of the truths which they possessed, such that over time they would draw unconsciously on realities they could not articulate, and “centuries might pass without the formal expression of a truth, which had been all along the secret life of millions of faithful souls”.

Two years later, in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Newman developed this thesis at much greater

length, addressing the apparently undisputable historical reality that Christian teaching had varied so much over the centuries that one might legitimately wonder whether there had been any true ‘continuity of doctrine’ since Apostolic times.

Newman argued that a genuine continuity of doctrine could indeed be discerned, with any appearances to the contrary to be expected, given that Christianity is a living thing; butterflies do not obviously resemble the caterpillars from which they grow, after all, but the butterfly is, as it were, ‘written’ in the caterpillar and should be regarded as its authentic and flourishing mature form, just as the chicken is written in the egg, and the mustard bush in the proverbial mustard seed.

“Some Protestants believed that Christianity had only developed by absorbing foreign elements, which necessitated a return to a Bible-only religion”

In a famous passage he wrote that while it is sometimes said that streams are clearest near where they rise, this is not quite true for the history of philosophy or belief, which: “...is more equable, and purer, and stronger, when its bed has become deep, and broad, and full. It necessarily rises out of an existing state of things, and for a time savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary.”

Newman had long believed growth, as he remarks in his spiritual autobiography, “the only evidence of life”, and just as he regarded the Church as a living thing, so he regarded development of Christian tradition as inevitable. To be faithful, however, a development must retain “both the doctrine and the principle with which it started”.

As a living thing, however, he noted that doctrine was prone to develop in an organic fashion: “From time to time it makes essays which fail and are in consequence abandoned. It seems in suspense which way to go; it wavers, and at length strikes out in one definite direction. In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing; parties rise and fall around it;



Pope Paul VI makes the closing speech at Vatican II.

dangers and hopes appear in new relations; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”

This notion of organic development was perhaps Newman’s greatest contribution to Christian thought. Hitherto there had been a number of ways of addressing the question of doctrinal development, none of which Newman found satisfactory.

Some Protestants believed that Christianity had only developed by absorbing foreign elements, which necessitated a return to a Bible-only religion and seemed to contradict the guarantees Christ had given his Church, while Anglicans tended to favour the principle of St Vincent of Lerins that Christianity is “what has been held always, everywhere, and by all”, which Newman felt unworkable and inclined to undercut all Christian groups without exception.

Catholic theories on development tended to hold that all doctrines had always been explicitly present even if secretly so, but the Scholastic theory of logical explication based on deductions from earlier formulations did not fit

easily with the known facts of history, and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet’s principle of clarification which saw developments as later explanations of earlier formulations did not really explain how so much development had demonstrably taken place.

Doctrine

Just as Newman’s contemporary Darwin was not the first to envisage some form of development of species, so Newman, then, was not the first to envisage some form of development of doctrine; what was new, however, was his belief that doctrine developed organically, with the faithful reason of believers working over centuries under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to nurture and polish the original revelation so that it became a divine philosophy.

That Newman should have thought in this ‘evolutionary’ fashion is hardly surprising given how ‘progress’ was the central theme in mid-19th-Century thought; the Industrial Revolution had dramatically changed technology, culture, and society, such that scholars and intellectuals of all sorts wrestled with how economies, life, personalities, and ideas develop.

Newman may have regarded the process of development as

organic, but he certainly did not believe it aimless or random; if he thought Vincent of Lerins’ approach unworkable, nonetheless it had value in how it defined authentic development in doctrine as “a real progress for the faith, and not an alteration: the characteristic of progress being that each element grows and yet remains itself, while the characteristic of alteration is that one thing is transformed into another”.

As Newman understood it, true developments retained both the original doctrine and the original principle.

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Having early in his Anglican career regarded dogma as a mere necessary evil, taking the view that ideally Christianity would be – as it surely was in its earliest years – simple and free of such clutter, by the time he came to write his *Grammar of Assent* he had come to believe that the supposition that there was “a contrariety and antagonism between a dogmatic creed and vital religion” was simply false.

He explained that dogma ascertains and makes clear “the truths on which the religious imagination has to rest”, as “knowledge must ever precede the exercise of the affections”;

“That Newman should have thought in this ‘evolutionary’ fashion is hardly surprising given how ‘progress’ was the central theme in mid-19th-Century thought”

seeds of Vatican II were sown



emotional and imaginative sentiment, he argued, depend on the intellect, and as such devotion depends upon dogma.

If it might seem surprising that this take could ever have proved congenial to him, given his earlier views, it is worth turning to G.K. Chesterton, the final chapter of whose *Orthodoxy* seems to owe a clear debt to Newman's *Grammar* – it seems most fitting, given this, that Fr Ian Ker, today's leading Newman scholar, just a few years ago wrote the most comprehensive biography of Chesterton there is.

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In *Orthodoxy*, Chesterton observes that Christianity needs doctrine if it is to flourish and to be free: "Catholic doctrine and discipline may be walls; but they are the walls of a playground. [...] We might fancy some children playing on the flat grassy top of some tall island in the sea. So long as there was a wall round the cliff's edge they could fling themselves into every frantic game and make the place the noisiest of nurseries. But the walls were knocked down, leaving the naked peril of the precipice.

"They did not fall over; but when their friends returned to them they were all huddled in terror in the centre of the island; and their song had ceased."

Given this, the teaching duty of the Church, for Newman, could hardly have been clearer. To a Catholic, he wrote to Richard Holt Hutton in 1871, the Church is, so to speak, "a standing Apostolic committee – to answer questions, which the Apostles are not here to answer, concerning what they



Pope John XXIII instigated Vatican II.

received and preached".

Not knowing more than the Apostles, he explained, there are questions the Church cannot answer, but it nonetheless was empowered to state the doctrine of the Apostles, "what is to be believed, and what is not such".

“Proper instruction in the realities of the Catholic Faith, then, is vital if the laity is to be empowered, and health of the Church to be robust”

This imposed a responsibility on the Magisterium so fearful that, Newman believed, occasional

excesses of zeal on the part of the Church's doctrinal watchdogs were as understandable as they were unavoidable:

"In this curious sceptical world, such sensitiveness is the only human means by which the treasure of faith can be kept inviolate. There is a woe in Scripture against the unfaithful shepherd. We do not blame the watch-dog because he sometimes flies at the wrong person. I conceive the force, the peremptoriness, the sternness, with which the Holy See comes down upon the vagrant or the robber, trespassing upon the enclosure of revealed truth, is the only sufficient antagonist to the power and subtlety of the world, to imperial comprehensiveness, monarchical selfishness, nationalism, the liberalism of

philosophy, the encroachments and usurpation of science."

Occasional bouts of hypervigilance, then, however regrettable, were a price worth paying if the integrity of the Faith was to be protected. Not, of course, that it was for the Holy See alone to guard the deposit of faith. One of the other great themes in Newman's writing, and one which flourished in the Second Vatican Council, was the role of the laity in preserving the truth that had been revealed; as early as 1835 Newman remarked of the laity to his friend Richard H. Froude that "the maintenance of the Faith is their clear prerogative".

Clearly seeing the laity as an essentially conservative body, in 1859's *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine* Newman argued forcefully that it was appropriate for Rome to take into account what the laity believed on issues as yet undefined. It was wise to do this, he said, "because the body of the faithful is one of the witnesses to the fact of the tradition of revealed doctrine, and because their consensus through Christendom is the voice of the Infallible Church".

“Newman regarded doctrine as something that developed but did so organically”

When Newman spoke of the laity being consulted, he stressed, he did not mean that the Magisterium should seek their opinion on how Rome should define things; rather, he said, the Holy See should consult the laity as a man would consult a barometer or a railway timetable, as a simple matter of fact: the question on any given doctrine was not "what does the laity believe the Church should teach?" so much as "what does the laity see Church teaching as being?"

Newman was careful to speak, too, of the laity as a whole, referring to the consensus fidelium, the shared mind of the faithful throughout the world. He was all too aware of how portions of the laity could be out of step with the mind of the universal Church, noting, for instance, in his lectures on *The Present Position of Catholics in England*, that:

"In all times the laity have been the measure of the Catholic spirit; they saved the Irish Church three centuries ago and they betrayed the Church in England. Our rulers were true, our people were cowards."

Insofar as the Church's infallibility subsisted in the laity, then, it did so in a universal, not a sectional sense, and depended to an enormous – perhaps to an absolute – degree on how effectively and thoroughly they had been raised and formed in the truths of the Faith.

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Newman's views on the laity as

an authentic channel of tradition had been formed by his studies of the Arian heresy and how it was received by the 4th-Century Church. Distinguishing between the part of the Church that teaches and the part of the Church that is taught, Newman maintained that the 4th-Century Church leadership had hardly covered itself in glory, whereas the sort of well-instructed laity for which he hoped in his own day resisted the Arian innovations and maintained the true doctrine of the Church:

"For I argue that, unless they had been catechised, as St Hilary says, in the orthodox faith from the time of their baptism, they never could have had that horror, which they show, of the heterodox Arian doctrine. Their voice, then, is the voice of tradition..."

In short, then, Newman regarded doctrine as something that developed but did so organically, developments arising and being embraced gradually after centuries of reflection, these developments being signs of true growth, rather than the kind of changes that would change the essential character of things.

Theologians had the job of thinking and pondering on what the Church believed, but it was not for them to steer Peter's barque; rather, he believed, that task was primarily that of the Magisterium, with the Pope's primary role being to ensure the Church's unity in truth. If theologians should step outside the boundaries of the Church's belief, or threaten to lead others outside the established limits of Christian truth, then it was the duty of Rome to step in. Doing otherwise would be to neglect Rome's pastoral duties: good shepherds try to prevent sheep from straying, and strive to bring back lost sheep.

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As for the laity, Newman saw theirs as an essentially conservative role, their job being in large part to watch the watchmen, to preserve the historical faith and practice of the Church – because practice does not merely reflect faith, but can drive faith, with changes in practice leading to changes in faith – even when clergy and theologians discard and deny what the Church had long believed and done.

But the laity could not do this job, Newman was clear, unless they knew and embraced the Church's authentic historical belief; without a well-catechised laity, there could be no true *sensus fidelium*. Proper instruction in the realities of the Catholic Faith, then, is vital if the laity is to be empowered, and health of the Church to be robust.

This lesson, surely, is one we need to remember even more urgently now than in Newman's day.



Two of Newman's greatest works were dedicated to showing that Christianity is profoundly reasonable, writes **Dr Tom Norris**

When Blessed John Henry Newman (1801-1890) is named by Pope Francis among the saints of the Catholic Church on Sunday, October 13, he will be the first Englishman born since the Reformation to be canonised.

His canonisation will be warmly welcomed in the Church of England and in the wider Anglican Communion, as of course in the Catholic Church. He was a man of many parts who travelled a huge journey, an itinerary of many stages and fascinating variety, to become a Catholic Christian at the mid-point of a life spanning almost the whole of the 19th Century. In 1963 Pope Paul VI described that journey of learning, action and holiness as "the most toilsome, but also the greatest, the most meaningful, the most conclusive, that human thought ever travelled during the last century, indeed one might say during the modern era".

And yet this was an English parish priest: at his death in 1890 over 15,000 people lined the streets of Birmingham.

That journey into Catholic faith almost didn't begin. In his autobiography, the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, he tells us that already in teenage years he read French atheists such as Voltaire. Their writing made a deep impression on him.

Providence

A kindly providence, however, exposed him to Christian writings at the same time. In particular, there was the headmaster of his school, Walter Mayers, who put some works by Thomas Scott and others in the teenager's way for the summer of 1816. These books were destined to impact the young student very



A harmony of Faith and reason



deeply.

Decades afterwards he described that impact in these words: "From the age of 15, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion: I know no other religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery. As well can there be filial love without the fact of a father, as devotion without the fact of a Supreme Being." His conviction at the time expressed itself in a motto, 'Holiness before peace'.

Shortly afterwards he went up to Oxford where a brilliant and dramatic adventure started to unfold. I shall not go into detail in relation to that "greatest of journeys", to quote St Pope Paul

VI. My focus rather will be on his understanding of the connection of reason and faith.

“For Newman, Faith follows revelation, that is the way God himself speaks to us, itself ‘the initial and essential idea of Christianity’”

To that end we will need to look first at the world around the young John Henry. The context of his life and work in Oxford in the early decades of the century is a key to his journey. Three aspects of that culture are essential to

understanding him.

First, there was the narrow rationalism deriving from the world of the sciences. All around him Newman saw advancing the conviction that science was based on "strong reason" while faith and theology were based on "weak reason". In fact, as early as 1831 he had used the term "weak reason". It was an attitude far removed from that of the opening of John Paul's great encyclical *Fides et ratio* which speaks of the "two wings of faith and reason" by which we ascend towards God.

For Newman, Faith follows revelation, that is the way God himself speaks to us, itself "the initial and essential idea of Christianity". Now this revelation speaks to the depths of our humanity, to the heart of the person. Of this Newman was convinced to the point that he chose as his motto as cardinal, '*Cor ad cor loquitur*: 'Heart speaks to the heart'. Science, then, is not the measure of Christian faith.

Second, there was doctrinal liberalism, taking the view that doctrines are only opinions that happen to be held by groups of people. In this threat Newman diagnosed the most perfect antithesis of faith, which was the idea that Faith did not access the final reality.

Truth

He spoke on the occasion of receiving the red hat from Pope Leo XIII in 1879 that he had spent up to 40 years resisting the spirit of

doctrinal liberalism. Christianity, he said, is based on facts – revealed facts. Nobody dies for theories or opinions, he stressed, they die for truths and for the Truth! And all this from someone who sang the praises of a "liberal education" and its product, the culture of the mind.

“Reason, he writes, is popular believed to require ‘strong evidence’ before it assents while faith is content with ‘weaker evidence’”

The third challenge came not from outside but from within. It placed the emphasis on religious feelings. The Romantic movement and the rise of Evangelical Protestantism had given new currency to emotional feelings of conversion and spiritual feelings in general. John Henry did underline the role of 'imagination', 'heart' and the 'affections' in Faith, but he remained suspicious, however, of what would devalue the sacramental, historical and doctrinal components of Christianity.

In the words of the late Michael Paul Gallagher SJ, what was needed, in Newman's view, was a fresh "anthropology of faith", a new religious understanding of the human person. In any case this is the true key to two of his greatest works that span the greater part of his life – the *Oxford University Sermons* and the *Grammar of Assent*. It is to these



Painting of Newman and Ambrose St John in Rome, Birmingham Oratory. Photos: Newmancanonisation.com



Original grave in Rednal, Birmingham where Cardinal Newman was buried.



Private library of Cardinal Newman, Birmingham Oratory.

we must principally turn in order to advance our effort to understand his study of this great topic.

No less a man than Cardinal Avery Dulles SJ in his book *The Survival of Dogma* reads the Oxford University Sermons as “perhaps the most useful analysis of the relationship between faith and reason for our time”.

In the Preface to a third edition, Newman sets down “their doctrine...in a categorical form”. He first states the popular notion of faith and reason. Reason, he writes, is popularly believed to require “strong evidence” before it assents while faith is content with “weaker evidence”.

Questioning this notion of ‘reason’, he notices three senses of the word.

The first consists in “expertness in logical argument”.

The second sense is that of “a faculty of framing evidences”. It means that “the mind is supposed to reason severely, when it rejects antecedent proof of a fact”. In other words, by this understanding reason is only seen as properly working if it rules out the factual claims underpinning conclusions. If this is the only sense of reason allowed, it is obvious that religion can have no dogmas or revealed truths: it can have only opinions.

The third popular meaning of reason is present where people discuss religious questions without due preparation of heart. This is what Scripture calls “the wisdom of the world”.

The opening chapters of St Paul’s

two Letters to the Corinthians provide a vivid instance in the contrast between the wisdom based on the Crucified and the rejecting vision of the “worldly wise” who cannot make any sense of Jesus Crucified. The net effect will inevitably be the relegation of faith and faith-questions to the realms of the pre-scientific or opinion.

The question has to arise: are these the only operations of human reason? Perhaps there are other expressions of thought and mind? Newman enlarges the sense of reason and reasoning against their reduction. He therefore writes with insight: “By the exercise of reason...is properly meant any process or act of the mind by which, from knowing one thing it advances to know another.”

From costly personal experience he knew that, in the words of Michael Paul Gallagher, any fruitful path towards faith will always need a certain spiritual receptivity as opposed to arrogant distance. In his view the religious horizon becomes real, not through clever argumentation, but only, as he says in the *University Sermons*, when “the heart is alive”.

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John Henry had a particularly poignant experience which spoke volumes to him. He entered a vigorous debate with his brother, Charles. The latter had become an atheist. In the debate John Henry said bluntly to Charles: “You are not in a state of mind to

listen to argument of any kind.” This experience made John Henry aware that external approaches, in spite of their validity, neglect the subject, the inquirer himself.

“The living tradition of the Church sees three pillars pointing towards the credibility of the Faith message”

A metaphor he employed in the *University Sermons* is an arresting statement of the journey towards God. “The mind ranges to and fro, and spreads out, and advances forward with a quickness that has become a proverb, and a subtlety and versatility which baffle investigation,” he writes.

“It passes on from point to point...it makes progress not unlike a clamberer on a steep cliff, who, by quick eye, prompt hand, and firm foot, ascends how he knows not himself...and such mainly is the way in which all men, gifted or not gifted, commonly reason – not by rule, but by an inward faculty.”

Having concluded this study of the actual way we reason in matters of religion, one might have thought that Newman would leave the great topic. This was not to be the case, however. The faith of children and ordinary believers needed championing.

During a vacation in Switzerland, he had the insight with which to begin a second work on faith and reason, *A Grammar of Assent*,

which was the way we use our reason and minds in everyday life is a lot closer to how we tend to believe in terms of religion than is the strict scientific method.

“You are wrong in beginning with certitude – certitude is only a kind of assent – you should begin with contrasting assent and inference,” he later wrote, recalling his thinking at the time. Assent, he believed, is a judgement, and as such is unconditional and therefore certain, unlike inference, which he argued was conditional upon the truth of the evidences.

The structure of the *Grammar* bears this out: in the first half he views the relationship of assent or judgement to apprehension or understanding. In the second half he focuses on assent at some length.

Here he uses a term that has been the cause of much inquiry – the ‘illative sense’. An illustrious term, it has given rise to an equally famous debate as to its precise meaning! He wished to show that the faithful can believe what they cannot absolutely prove.

The living tradition of the Church sees three pillars pointing towards the credibility of the Faith message. These pillars are prophecy, holiness and miracles. They constitute the “motives of credibility” and enjoy an “objective” character.

But John Henry Newman was aware even in the 19th Century of what has been called “the turn to the subject”, an attention to the human person himself as a subject in his own right. John Henry was convinced that there is another and parallel way to reach Faith, a living logic of mind.

In a letter to a friend, he describes it in these terms: “There is a faculty of the mind which I think I have called the illative sense, which, when properly cultivated and used, answers to Aristotle’s phronesis [practical wisdom], its province being, not virtue, but the ‘search for truth’, which decides for us, beyond any technical rules, when, how, etc. to pass from inference to assent, and when and under what circumstances etc. not.”

This faculty is the very faculty of judgement which allows us to grasp hold of the truth on the basis of our experience. It terminates and finalises the movement from experience, through apprehension, understanding and

the accumulation of probabilities to that which is. In that fashion, the illative sense “determines what science cannot determine, the limit of converging probabilities, and the reasons sufficient for a proof”.

The illative sense names and identifies the way Newman would explain our de facto way to gain spiritual and moral truth, and so to the conviction of the existence of God. It fits with the uniqueness of religious truth, is touched by the imagination, and takes on board what Newman calls “antecedent probabilities”.

“Some exertion on the part of the persons I am to convert is a condition of a true conversion,” Newman wrote in the *Grammar*, having earlier noted that truth is attainable but that “its rays stream in upon us through the medium of our moral as well as our intellectual being”. The quest for truth, in other words, is a job for the whole person, intellectually, emotionally and morally.

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John Henry Newman spent his life bringing out and communicating the good news of Christ the Redeemer, at a time when Faith was widely seen as an exercise in “weak reason” while the flowering sciences entailed “strong reason”.

Newman challenged this lazy consensus, the great Anglican and Catholic convinced that the times needed an exposition of the real relationship between faith and reason. He saw this as personally necessary, pastorally essential and culturally urgent. If he did not undertake the project, his mission would be unfinished.

What did he do? He succeeded in demonstrating, at the heroic lengths of the Oxford University Sermons and the *Grammar of Assent*, the reasonableness of the act of faith against those believers who said reason was irrelevant while protecting the supernatural character of faith against those who wanted to reduce it to what could be scientifically proven.

Faith and reason, he showed, are friends.

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Revisiting a blessed occasion

In September 2010, Pope Benedict XVI visited England to beatify John Henry Newman, praising the saint ahead of and during the beatification Mass

Discourse at prayer vigil

As you know, Newman has long been an important influence in my own life and thought, as he has been for so many people beyond these isles. The drama of Newman's life invites us to examine our lives, to see them against the vast horizon of God's plan, and to grow in communion with the Church of every time and place: the Church of the apostles, the Church of the martyrs, the Church of the saints, the Church which Newman loved and to whose mission he devoted his entire life.

Let me begin by recalling that Newman, by his own account, traced the course of his whole life back to a powerful experience of conversion which he had as a young man. It was an immediate experience of the truth of God's word, of the objective reality of Christian revelation as handed down in the Church. This experience, at once religious and intellectual, would inspire his vocation to be a minister of the Gospel, his discernment of the source of authoritative teaching in the Church of God, and his zeal for the renewal of ecclesial life in fidelity to the apostolic tradition.

At the end of his life, Newman would describe his life's work as a struggle against the growing tendency to view religion as a purely private and subjective matter, a question of personal opinion. Here is the first lesson we can learn from his life: in our day, when an intellectual and moral relativism threatens to sap the very foundations of our society, Newman reminds us that, as men and women made in the image and likeness of God, we were created to know the truth, to find in that truth our ultimate freedom and the fulfilment of our deepest human aspirations. In a word, we are meant to know Christ, who is himself "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6).

Honesty

Newman's life also teaches us that passion for the truth, intellectual honesty and genuine conversion are costly.

The truth that sets us free cannot be kept to ourselves; it calls for testimony, it begs to be heard, and in the end its convincing power comes from itself and not



from the human eloquence or arguments in which it may be couched. Not far from here, at Tyburn, great numbers of our brothers and sisters died for the Faith; the witness of their fidelity to the end was ever more powerful than the inspired words that so many of them spoke before surrendering everything to the Lord.

“The ‘kindly light’ of Faith leads us to realise the truth about ourselves, our dignity as God’s children and the sublime destiny which awaits us in Heaven”

In our own time, the price to be paid for fidelity to the Gospel is no longer being hanged, drawn and quartered but it often involves being dismissed out of hand, ridiculed or parodied. And yet, the Church cannot withdraw from the task of proclaiming Christ and his Gospel as saving truth, the source of our ultimate happiness as individuals and as the foundation

of a just and humane society.

Finally, Newman teaches us that if we have accepted the truth of Christ and committed our lives to him, there can be no separation between what we believe and the way we live our lives. Our every thought, word and action must be directed to the glory of God and the spread of his Kingdom. Newman understood this, and was the great champion of the prophetic office of the Christian laity.

Teaching

He saw clearly that we do not so much accept the truth in a purely intellectual act as embrace it in a spiritual dynamic that penetrates to the core of our being. Truth is passed on not merely by formal teaching, important as that is, but also by the witness of lives lived in integrity, fidelity and holiness; those who live in and by the truth instinctively recognise what is false and, precisely as false, inimical to the beauty and goodness which accompany the splendour of truth, *veritatis splendor*.

Tonight's first reading is the magnificent prayer in which Saint Paul asks that we be granted to

Pope Benedict XVI in Birmingham in 2010 and, right, pictured during his homily.



know "the love of Christ which surpasses all understanding" (Eph 3:14-21). The Apostle prays that Christ may dwell in our hearts through Faith (*cf.* Eph 3:17) and that we may come to "grasp, with all the saints, the breadth and the length, the height and the depth" of that love. Through Faith we come to see God's word as a lamp for our steps and light for our path (*cf.* Ps 119:105).

Newman, like the countless saints who preceded him along the path of Christian discipleship, taught that the 'kindly light' of Faith leads us to realise the truth about ourselves, our dignity as God's children and the sublime destiny which awaits us in Heaven.

By letting the light of Faith shine in our hearts, and by abiding in that light through our daily union with the Lord in prayer and participation in the life-giving sacraments of the Church, we ourselves become light to those around us; we exercise our 'prophetic office'; often, without even knowing it, we draw people one step closer to the Lord and his truth.

Without the life of prayer, without the interior transformation which takes

place through the grace of the sacraments, we cannot, in Newman's words, "radiate Christ"; we become just another "clashing cymbal" (1 Cor 13:1) in a world filled with growing noise and confusion, filled with false paths leading only to heartbreak and illusion.

“No one who looks realistically at our world today could think that Christians can afford to go on with business as usual”

One of the Cardinal's best-loved meditations includes the words, "God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another" (*Meditations on Christian Doctrine*). Here we see Newman's fine Christian realism, the point at which Faith and life inevitably intersect. Faith is meant to bear fruit in the transformation of our world through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives and activity of believers. No one who

‘He lived out that profoundly human vision of priestly ministry in his devoted care for the people’

Beatification Mass homily

England has a long tradition of martyr saints, whose courageous witness has sustained and inspired the Catholic community here for centuries.

Yet it is right and fitting that we should recognise today the holiness of a confessor, a son of this nation who, while not called to shed his blood for the Lord, nevertheless bore eloquent witness to him in the course of a long life devoted to the priestly ministry, and especially to preaching, teaching, and writing.

He is worthy to take his place in a long line of saints and scholars from these islands, St Bede, St Hilda, Saint Aelred, Blessed Duns Scotus, to name but a few. In Blessed John Henry, that tradition of gentle scholarship, deep human wisdom and profound love for the Lord has borne rich fruit, as a sign of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit deep within the heart of God’s people, bringing forth abundant gifts of holiness.

Cardinal Newman’s motto, *Cor ad cor loquitur*, or ‘Heart speaks unto heart’, gives us an insight into his understanding of the Christian life as a call to holiness, experienced as the profound desire of the human heart to enter into intimate communion with the Heart of God. He reminds us that faithfulness to prayer gradually transforms us into the divine likeness.

Habit of prayer

As he wrote in one of his many fine sermons, “a habit of prayer, the practice of turning to God and the unseen world in every season, in every place, in every emergency – prayer, I say, has what may be called a natural effect in spiritualizing and elevating the soul. A man is no longer what he was before; gradually...he has imbibed a new set of ideas, and become imbued with fresh principles” (*Parochial and Plain Sermons*, iv, 230-231).

Today’s Gospel tells us that no one can be the servant of two masters (cf. Lk 16:13), and Blessed John Henry’s teaching on prayer explains how the faithful Christian is definitively taken into the service of the one true Master, who alone has a claim to our unconditional devotion (cf. Mt 23:10).

Newman helps us to understand what this means for our daily lives: he tells us that our divine Master has assigned a specific task to each one of us, a “definite service”, committed uniquely to every single person:



“I have my mission”, he wrote, “I am a link in a chain, a bond of connexion between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do his work; I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place...if I do but keep his commandments and serve him in my calling” (*Meditations and Devotions*, 301-2).

The definite service to which Blessed John Henry was called involved applying his keen intellect and his prolific pen to many of the most pressing ‘subjects of the day’. His insights into the relationship between Faith and reason, into the vital place of revealed religion in civilised society, and into the need for a broadly-based and wide-ranging approach to education were not only of profound importance for Victorian England, but continue today to inspire and enlighten many all over the world.

“Blessed John Henry’s teaching on prayer explains how the faithful Christian is definitively taken into the service of the one true Master”

I would like to pay particular tribute to his vision for education, which has done so much to shape the ethos that is the driving force behind Catholic schools and colleges today. Firmly opposed to any reductive or utilitarian approach, he sought to achieve an educational environment in which intellectual training, moral discipline and religious commitment would come together. The project to found a Catholic University in

Ireland provided him with an opportunity to develop his ideas on the subject, and the collection of discourses that he published as *The Idea of a University* holds up an ideal from which all those engaged in academic formation can continue to learn.

And indeed, what better goal could teachers of religion set themselves than Blessed John Henry’s famous appeal for an intelligent, well-instructed laity: “I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious, but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it” (*The Present Position of Catholics in England*, ix, 390).

On this day when the author of those words is raised to the altars, I pray that, through his intercession and example, all who are engaged in the task of teaching and catechesis will be inspired to greater effort by the vision he so clearly sets before us.

While it is John Henry Newman’s intellectual legacy that has understandably received most attention in the vast literature devoted to his life and work, I prefer on this occasion to conclude with a brief reflection on his life as a priest, a pastor of souls.

The warmth and humanity underlying his appreciation of the pastoral ministry is beautifully expressed in another of his famous sermons: “Had Angels been your priests, my brethren, they could not have consoled with you, sympathised with you, have had compassion on you, felt tenderly for you, and made allowances for you, as we can; they could not have been your patterns and guides, and

have led you on from your old selves into a new life, as they can who come from the midst of you” (‘Men, not Angels: the Priests of the Gospel’, *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, 3).

He lived out that profoundly human vision of priestly ministry in his devoted care for the people of Birmingham during the years that he spent at the Oratory he founded, visiting the sick and the poor, comforting the bereaved, caring for those in prison. No wonder that on his death so many thousands of people lined the local streets as his body was taken to its place of burial not half a mile from here.

“I would like to pay particular tribute to his vision for education, which has done so much to shape the ethos that is the driving force behind Catholic schools and colleges”

120 years later, great crowds have assembled once again to rejoice in the Church’s solemn recognition of the outstanding holiness of this much-loved father of souls. What better way to express the joy of this moment than by turning to our heavenly Father in heartfelt thanksgiving, praying in the words that Blessed John Henry Newman placed on the lips of the choirs of angels in heaven:

*Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise;
In all his words most wonderful,
Most sure in all his ways!*

– *The Dream of Gerontius*.

– **Coffton Park, Birmingham, September 19, 2010**



looks realistically at our world today could think that Christians can afford to go on with business as usual, ignoring the profound crisis of Faith which has overtaken our society, or simply trusting that the patrimony of values handed down by the Christian centuries will continue to inspire and shape the future of our society.

We know that in times of crisis and upheaval God has raised up great saints and prophets for the renewal of the Church and Christian society; we trust in his providence and we pray for his continued guidance. But each of us, in accordance with his or her state of life, is called to work for the advancement of God’s Kingdom by imbuing temporal life with the values of the Gospel. Each of us has a mission, each of us is called to change the world, to work for a culture of life, a culture forged by love and respect for the dignity of each human person.

As our Lord tells us in the Gospel we have just heard, our light must shine in the sight of all, so that, seeing our good works, they may give praise to our heavenly Father (cf. Mt 5:16).

– **Hyde Park, London, September 18, 2010**



Hans and Sophie Scholl with Christoph Probst in Munich in 1942.



Newman had a profound influence on a German anti-Nazi group, writes **Greg Daly**

But we know by whom we were created, and that we stand in a

relationship of moral obligation to our creator. Conscience gives us the capacity to distinguish between good and evil," wrote Fritz Hartnagel, a young German army officer on the Eastern Front, to his girlfriend Sophie Scholl in July 1943. "We must submit our reason to these mysteries, and confess the Faith," he concluded at the end of the letter.

Before Fritz had been dispatched to the front that May, Sophie had given him a gift of two volumes of Newman's sermons – he told Sophie that amidst the horrors of the front, Newman's writings were "like drops of precious wine", and it seems that shortly before penning this July letter he had read Newman's 1838 homily on 'The Testimony of Conscience'.

Courage

Sophie Scholl may well be the most famous German woman at least of the last century, her courage as – aged just 21 – she faced a Nazi guillotine in Munich's Stadelheim prison on February 22, 1943, having become proverbial in her homeland. With her brother Hans and several other young like-minded Germans, she had realised that the Nazi regime was an abomination and had taken to holding secret meetings, writing down their opinions, and spreading them about.

The White Rose of Conscience



Sophie's arrest in February 1943, as portrayed in *Sophie Scholl – The Last Days*.

"She is regarded as one of the greatest Germans ever," says Paul Shrimpton, author of *Conscience Before Conformity: Hans and Sophie Scholl and the White Rose Resistance in Nazi Germany*. "She's in their hall of fame, the Walhalla, there are about 200 schools named after her, squares and buildings, and at the end of the second millennium one of the German magazines carried out a survey of the most famous Germans of all time, and I think she topped the bill as the most famous German woman. There are lots of surveys and different things like that which indicate the regard they have for her. Every German girl and boy attending school in Germany, they all know her."

The courage of the Scholls and their White Rose resistance group is remarkable, Dr Shrimpton tells *The Irish Catholic*, for both its courage and for how it seemed to epitomise the very best of German life at the time.

"During the Second World War there were two main acts of resistance in Germany – one was the July 1944 bomb plot to assassinate Hitler, and this was the other one," he explains. "Really what's striking from my point of view, having got to know them through their letters and diaries and things, is that unlike virtually all the other people who resisted who came from the left inspired

by Bolshevik ideology, these are upper-middle-class, highly-educated model Germans.

“During the Second World War there were two main acts of resistance in Germany – one was the July 1944 bomb plot to assassinate Hitler, and this was the other one”

"When they were being interrogated in court the people dealing with them just couldn't work it out, because from every angle these were perfect products of the Aryan system: sporting, academic, musical, artistic, everything," he continues. "So it was a shock – the reverberations went all the way up to Hitler's cabinet, so in the end Hitler himself was following via his underlings what was going on, and when the trial was taking place, he gave the order that they were to be executed the same day. It struck right to the heart of the Nazi regime."

In 2010, Dr Shrimpton continues, two articles were published in the German *Newman Studien* journal arguing that there were significant links between Newman and the White Rose group, and as he

followed this up for himself by reading the letters and diaries of members of the group, he was struck by how little attention had hitherto been paid to this.

"All of a sudden I realised that virtually all the people writing their stories had not done justice to the situation," he says. "They'd skipped over the religious and conscience aspect of them, which was just immense, and really was the only thing that properly explains their actions."

Indeed, he adds, Pope Benedict XVI may well have had the Scholls in mind when he addressed Queen Elizabeth II during his September 2010 visit to Britain to beatify Newman just a few months after these articles were published.

Recalling how he and the Queen had lived through World War II, the then Pope had said: "Britain and her leaders stood against a Nazi tyranny that wished to eradicate God from society and denied our common humanity to many, especially the Jews, who were thought unfit to live. I also recall the regime's attitude to Christian pastors and religious who spoke the truth in love, opposed the Nazis and paid for that opposition to their lives."

* * * * *

There is no direct evidence that Benedict specifically had the Scholls in mind, of course, but as Dr Shrimpton says, their names are

known to all Germans today, the links between them and Newman were being discussed in the months ahead of the papal visit, and Benedict's own interest in Newman was long established.

"It's completely speculative," he says, "but on the other hand, when Pope Benedict entered the seminary in 1946 in Germany, his monitor was a Newman expert, working on Newman and conscience, and he kept bumping into people whose major interest at that time was Newman.

"He's absolutely saturated with Newman's ideas and he's actually spoken in Rome on Newman and conscience, including at least one address in 1990."

Newman's ideas were the subject of serious interest in inter-war Germany, Dr Shrimpton says. A Jesuit priest and philosopher named Erich Przywara had done important work on the Englishman, for example, and had asked Edith Stein – then a fresh convert – to translate *The Idea of a University*.

"There were a lot of people who found it answered a big need there, really," says Dr Shrimpton, maintaining that the most important figure in promoting Newman in Germany between the wars was Theodor Haecker, who had encountered Newman's writings in 1917 and who in 1920 wrote to the Birmingham Oratory asking for permission to translate



Fabian Hinrichs as Hans Scholl with Florian Stetter as Christoph Probst, Maximilian Brückner as Willi Graf and Julia Jentsch as Sophie Scholl in 2005's *Sophie Scholl – The Last Days*.

Newman's *Grammar of Assent* into English.

"He's the key," insists Dr Shrimpton. "There were several people, but he was absolutely key, because he writes off to the Birmingham Oratory asking for a copy of the *Grammar of Assent*, takes nine months to translate it, becomes a Catholic, and then devotes the rest of his life to translating and promoting Newman's ideas."

In time Haecker would become associated with the White Rose group, but the Scholls seem to have been familiar with Newman's thought even before encountering Haecker in person, although it is not clear how Sophie first got to know his writing.

"The first time recorded is when she and Fritz find one of his books in a bookshop, and the Haecker thing came a year or so later," Dr Shrimpton says, citing how a friend of hers had later described Sophie in 1941 pressing a book by Newman onto her, saying: "What You don't know him? There's a wonderful world awaiting you there!"

“One doesn't know whether Newman was banned or not, because he was a dead English writer. The living ones were certainly banned”

There could, of course, have been indirect links between Haecker and Sophie at that point, Dr Shrimpton concedes, pointing out how second-hand booksellers at the time would often have had both public and private aspects, with the latter entailing them selling banned books to people who they thought might be interested in them.

"One doesn't know whether Newman was banned or not, because he was a dead English writer. The living ones were certainly banned – anyone from a country Germany was fighting who was living as an author was

banned," Dr Shrimpton says.

"Sophie got keen on him, and what she was keen on, Fritz was keen on too, and Hans. By chance, you could say, they came in touch through Carl Muth, who was a disinherited journal editor, with all his underground friends, people who were former academics, journalists, writers and authors, who met secretly. What's extraordinary is the amount of cultural resistance going on, with the adults somehow in parallel with Hans and company. When they meet, it's the most extraordinary thing."

This was the context in which Sophie gave Fritz two volumes of Newman sermons as a parting gift when he set off for the Eastern Front, Dr Shrimpton says, adding that after Fritz returned home and met Sophie's bereaved parents, he himself gave them another book of Newman's sermons.

Sophie's parents, though Lutherans and despite claims that Sophie shied away from converting to Catholicism at the last because of a concern that it would distress her mother, were not far from unsympathetic to the wise words of committed Catholics. Indeed, in the summer of 1941 they had been particularly impressed by how the Catholic Bishop of Münster, Clemens von Galen, had become Germany's first major public figure to speak out against the Nazi regime.

* * * * *

Over the course of three homilies, Bishop von Galen spoke about the confiscation of Church property as a forerunner to attacks on personal freedom, about the Nazis' "deep-seated hatred of Christianity, which they are determined to destroy", and about Germany's euthanasia programme.

The Aktion T4 programme had been responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of mentally ill and physically handicapped people, and condemning this, the so-called 'Lion of Münster' challenged the "monstrous doctrine, which tries to justify the murder of the innocent, which permits the slaughter of invalids who are no longer capable of work, cripples, the incurable, the

aged and the inform".

The full text of this homily was delivered anonymously to the Scholl family home in August 1941, with a message urging the recipients to make six copies and pass it on. "Finally a man has had the courage to speak out," Hans said, also remarking, "We really ought to have a duplicating machine." Sophie, meanwhile, copied the sermon privately and circulated it herself, while the family discussed the bishop's sermon at length.

"Magdalena Scholl, the mother, was a nurse or had been a nurse when she met her husband. She knew lots of nurses, though at the time she wasn't working as one, and had heard that lots of handicapped children were taken off and never came back, and all sorts of people realised that something fishy was going on," Dr Shrimpton says.

"What von Galen did in his third sermon was to point out to Germans that this could happen to injured soldiers coming back from the front, or people hurt in factories, and that I think struck so deeply that they decided to shut the whole operation down in the west and then transported it to the east and used it effectively in the concentration camps. It had to go underground after that," Dr Shrimpton says. "You could call it, if you wanted to – in modern terminology – 'pro-life issues'."

That Summer the Scholls and their friends began publishing a home-made magazine called *Windlicht* – 'Hurricane Lamp' – through which they tried to find a way to live under a totalitarian regime, with this leading to their meeting the Catholic journalist Carl Muth and his circle.

Footsteps

The following summer, joined by Christoph Probst, Hans's fellow soldier-medics Alexander Schmorrel and the Romano Guardini-influenced Willi Graf, and the academic Kurt Huber, the 'White Rose' group began following in the footsteps of Bishop von Galen and the network of – mainly – Catholic priests and altar

servers who spread copies of his anti-Nazi homilies by composing, duplicating, and sharing their own anti-Nazi leaflets.

Theodor Haecker was a clear influence on the group during this period, with the veteran Newman scholar convinced that the Nazi regime was a betrayal of Germany's Christian heritage.

"He was absolutely virulent on this," Dr Shrimpton says. "His diary, *A Journal in the Night*, is one of the great war journals. He was a philosopher, a social critic, so yes he's commenting on all the events going on, tearing into the Nazi regime again and again against their basic inhumanity but also how they detest Christianity as well at root."

“We know that Haecker read from his translations or quoted from them or summed up the arguments of Newman's idea on the 'Patristical idea of the Antichrist'”

Newman was certainly discussed explicitly by the group on at least two or three occasions, judging by people's diaries, Dr Shrimpton says.

"We know that the night before the fourth leaflet was written – the first three had a lot of Haecker influences – we know that Haecker, for example, read from his translations or quoted from them or summed up the arguments of Newman's idea on the 'Patristical idea of the Antichrist', which is quite a mouthful.

"It starts with the first millennium, and he's writing as an Anglican in these four sermons given in Oxford in 1838, I think it is, on the idea of Antichrist in the first Millennium. These are Advent sermons, so were presumably preached on for successive Sundays. Haecker thinks this is key to understanding what is going on. They actually fall out, because Hans think Hitler is the Antichrist, but Haecker says, no, no, this is one of the many forerunners of the great evil person, the being who will come in at the end of time," Dr Shrimpton says.

"It's very, very powerful stuff," he continues, noting that

on another occasion Haecker was recorded as reading from a collection of Newman's sermons to the group.

Little surprise then, that Haecker's fingerprints – and through his Newman's – have been detected in the pamphlets published by the White Rose, and little surprise too that the Scholls' lives during the war, cut short though they were, were marked by a profound religious awakening leading them towards Catholicism.

"You can see from their letters and diaries that they were very wary of the institutional Church but were absolutely won over with Augustine, Aquinas, Newman, and many, many others, but particular the French *Renouveau Catholique*," Dr Shrimpton says, citing also how Sophie and her friends had read George Bernanos *Diary of a Country Priest* while "Hans ploughs all the way" through Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

"And Sophie has attended Mass on quite a number of occasions, and writes beautifully about it. She clearly had lost faith in her own church completely," he adds.

* * * * *

Sophie and Hans were arrested on February 18, 1943, caught distributing copies of their sixth leaflet at the University of Munich, and the rest of the group were swiftly rounded up. Christoph Probst, raised with no particular religion, requested baptism and was received into the Catholic Church on February 22, 1943, the same day he, Hans, and Sophie were executed.

A deep Christian sensibility penetrated and inspired the group as a whole, Dr Shrimpton says, noting how Alexander Schmorrell has been "effectively canonised" by the Russian Orthodox Church, which regards him as glorified as a 'Passion-bearer', while work is afoot in the Archdiocese of Munich to open the sainthood cause of Willi Graf.

Praising how serious work is being done now revealing the extent to which a serious Christian Faith inspired and drove the members of the White Rose, Dr Shrimpton wryly observes that there are others determined to suppress this reality.

"There are a certain people who want to bury any religious angle and deny it," which is not facing up to the facts," he says.



Paul Shrimpton

Newman's profound impact on



The saint's heirs

Greg Daly

It is a curious thing, do you know," observes a friend of Stephen Dedalus, James Joyce's alter ego in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "how your mind is supersaturated in the religion in which you say you disbelieve."

For Notre Dame's Prof. Declan Kiberd, Ireland's major writers have tended to be much more deeply engaged with religion than might be commonly assumed, with Joyce being a textbook example of this.

"I wrote a book a few years ago called *Ulysses and Us* which basically argued that Joyce was a religious writer – extra-institutional of course – and that he was very critical of the Irish Catholic Church as an institution, mainly because of the way in which he felt that the priests in it didn't really believe what they said they believed," he says.

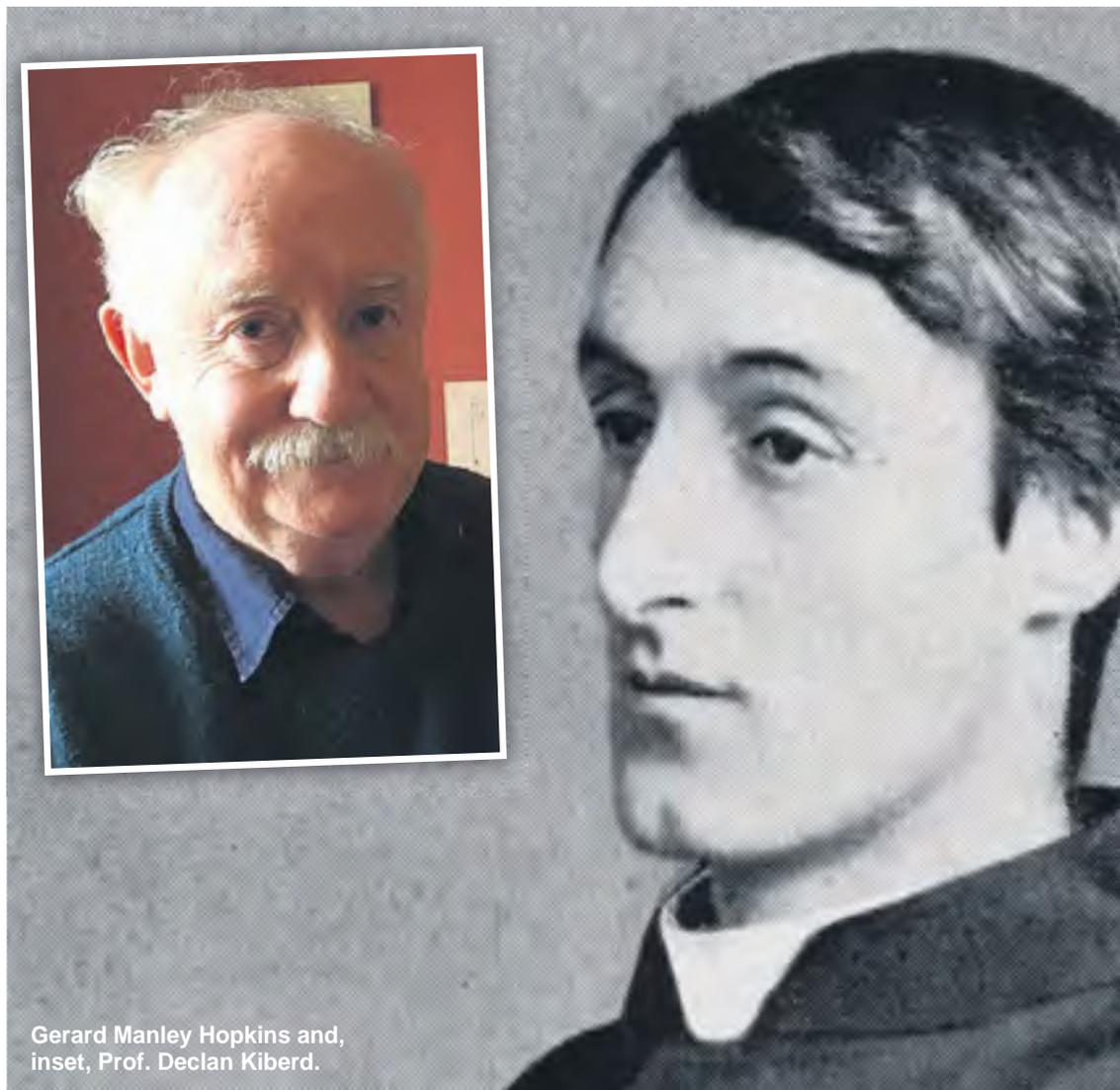
"He believed it as a child and took it seriously, and then discovered they didn't really. There's that scene in *Portrait* where the Dean of Studies and his father have a laugh behind his back about an unjust punishment he complains about – it's almost like a metaphor for his relations with Catholicism itself."

Deathbed

Noting how one of Joyce's sisters had described her brother as more deeply involved with Jesus than anyone she'd ever met, Prof. Kiberd says that in his book he tries to show how over *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, the young Stephen Dedalus, having refused his mother's wish that he kneel at her deathbed, or that he make his Easter duty, ends up actually confronting her in the brothel scene in *Ulysses*, and is then brought home by Leopold Bloom who gives him coffee and a bun.

"It's almost as if this young fellow who refused to make his Communion as an act of defiance against his mother and Catholicism, ends up receiving it in this unlikely form of Eucharist from a half-Jewish man," he says, adding that a great deal of modernism works that way with many modernist writers seeking to achieve a religious effect by other means.

Joyce "went to all the Easter ceremonies in Notre Dame in Paris when he lived there as a hero to the hyper-modernists", Prof. Kiberd



Gerard Manley Hopkins and, inset, Prof. Declan Kiberd.

“I began to think that the Catholic strand had major roots in Newman because Joyce said Newman was the great prose stylist of the English language...his prose is slightly silken, if I can use that word about it”

says. "He went the whole week, and he knew the whole Latin by heart, but he stood by the edge in the doorway, quietly uttering the words, but would not go up into the main part of the church."

Religion had played a key part in the Irish Revival of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, Prof. Kiberd points out, with Protestant writers especially expressing a form of Protestant Christianity very different from the form which was ascendant in the North.

"O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, which would be his generic play, in which Bessie Burgess, in a play filled with men talking about sacrifice, actually does sacrifice her life at the window for a neighbour, while using all this Protestant rhetoric in her speechifying," he says as an example.

"Or you've got Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*, whose main character is Christy – as in Christ – who is brought gifts by three people, who rides in triumph on an ass, and then becomes sacrificed so that the community can be bound together again."

Acknowledging that this is a very simple way of looking at these things, he says it's all clearly

there, and points to Shaw's *St Joan* as a story of a religious figure who bypasses the priests and bishops to communicate directly with God, helping to invent modern mysticism and also nationalism.

"They're all deeply religious texts when you start scratching beneath the surface, and some of them are very Protestant in their textuality," he says.

“Joyce went the whole week, and he knew the whole Latin by heart, but he stood by the edge in the doorway, quietly uttering the words...”

"For instance, my old friend Vivian Mercier used to joke that the Irish Revival was held in order to provide employment for the idle children of Protestant rectors, and if you think about it, Yeats, Douglas Hyde, Synge all come from Protestant ecclesiastical families, so it's not surprising in a way that they might in their texts be trying to get a kind of another version of

their religion."

This is very conscious on their part, he says, as tends to be the way with the great writers.

"My reading of that would be that they're all south Irish Protestants, very aware that a different form of Protestantism is emerging in the north, which is much more rudimentary, much more evangelical, much more in one way simplifying of the code they'd been brought up in, and they are basically involved in a kind-of life-and-death debate with northern co-religionists about who is going to inherit Ireland," he says. "They are putting in a strong bid for a kind of liberal southern Protestant – almost Bohemian – code, so obviously opposed to the business code which dominates the more Puritan forms of northern Protestantism."

With the Protestant characters of major writers of the Revival being so clear, he says, it's easy to miss a parallel Catholic strand.

"And I began to think that the Catholic strand had major roots in Newman because Joyce said Newman was the great prose

stylist of the English language," he says. "His prose is slightly silken, if I can use that word about it, which is what I think appealed to Joyce. It's sort of shiny and insinuating in a way that could almost be described and probably was by Kingsley and some of his enemies as slippery, but I think Joyce liked that element of it."

Observing that as a conversion narrative, Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* lies behind Joyce's *Portrait*, and that Joyce's incremental and accreted method of writing *Ulysses* echoed the *Apologia*, Prof. Kiberd notes how it's striking that when Joyce quotes Newman in the 'Oxen of the Sun' chapter of *Ulysses* he does so without parody.

"When he's doing Pepsys or Dickens or any of the others, it's parodistic and over the top, but when he does Newman he does him level, just as he is. And I think for that reason it's kind of homage as a form of imitation," he says.

Lectures

Joyce had been struck by Newman's idea in his lectures on the University that English has developed through a series of stylistic mutations, and that great writers in the early phases of a language had to be geniuses to achieve anything.

"Joyce probably was thinking most Irish people were using English for the first time in their lives around the time of Newman's lectures in the 1850s," Prof. Kiberd says.

"Their use of English had the excitement of surprise and intense discovery – it would be like African-Americans taking up the banjo or piano or violin and making jazz, this strange new sound, and Irish people were doing that with English as a new instrument of communication, the way Newman said Shakespeare, Chaucer, and the early users of English were geniuses because they were strong enough to use this new medium."

Where Joyce differed strongly from Newman was in the Englishman's conviction that the English literary tradition was inherently Protestant and had stabilised as such.

"That's his real point of dissent: even though he's hugely a fan and follower of Cardinal Newman he doesn't agree with that," observes Prof. Kiberd. "Joyce argues that Chaucer is a rewrite of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, that Milton is a Puritan transcript of the *Divine Comedy*, and that Shakespeare is an Italianate Englishman. In other words, Joyce believes that the three really great texts of English literature are Catholic, and rooted in the medieval Catholicism which Joyce himself was so fascinated by, following his studies in UCD and Aquinas and so on."

Whether or not Joyce was right, one irony about Newman's conviction, Prof. Kiberd observes, was that "the university he

the field of Irish literature

James Joyce.



founded and gave those founding lectures for in the 1850s would itself produce a whole string of Catholic writers”.

“It’s a very different tradition of Catholic writing than has been distinctive of modern Britain, a literature of conversion similarly drawing from Newman but exemplified by such writers as G.K. Chesterton...”

Not that Newman’s influence on Irish Catholic writing was limited to UCD, it should be added, with the Trinity College- and Oxford-educated Oscar Wilde being an important follower of Newman, something that’s been effectively shown by Trinity’s Dr Jarlath Killeen, author of *The Faiths of Oscar Wilde* and *The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde*.

“He argues for instance something Joyce actually said about Wilde, that the sense of loss inherent in sin is the key to his art. ‘Experience is the name a man gives to his mistakes’ – *The Importance of Being Earnest* is about how you learn more from your errors than from your right moments. That’s the *felix culpa*, the happy fault which can be happy if you’re educated by your sin,” Prof. Kiberd says.

“In fact when Wilde was locked up the first thing he asked for

“It goes then to people like Flann O’Brien, the idea of a multiple self, which Newman cultivated and which Wilde believed in and Joyce too”

was the writings of Newman for prison reading, when the governor told him he could read, when he discovered he had an intellectual prisoner on his hands,” he adds.

Newman and Wilde were both accused of justifying lying in the service of a deeper point, he continues, with both men – like, later, Flann O’Brien – allowing false rumours to circulate uncorrected about themselves.

It’s possible to map a kind of ‘ludic’ or playful tradition around these authors which suggests that the truth value of art is less important than the extent to which it nourishes the imagination and the spirit, Prof. Kiberd says. “This is what Newman says about the making of a gentleman in the arts degree: that it is literally not useful, that’s its beauty. It’s not utilitarian.

“This is Newman against the kind of efficiency and Gradgrindery of the Victorian period, and I’m saying that he opposed the spirit of that age, and that all people who opposed the spirit of the age capture it more fully than those who reflect it.

“That opposition to use value passes on to Wilde who says that all art is useless, perfectly useless, and glories in this fact. It goes then to people like Flann O’Brien, the idea of a multiple self, which Newman cultivated and which Wilde believed in and Joyce too, that the self is not singular but multiple and playful.”

This tradition was especially prominent among Catholic writers linked with UCD, it seems.

“It’s in Hopkins as well, who of course worked in the university

and could be arguably seen along with Joyce as the most playful punster in the English language and who had that same sense of art as fun, but then you go through those people who are called Catholic modernists who came out of UCD in the 1930s, people like Denis Devlin and Brian Coffey. Flann O’Brien most famously, I suppose, but even going back someone like Thomas MacDonagh was a bit like that,” he says.

“I suppose what I’m saying is there’s a kind of aesthetic philosophy whose most famous example in the world is Joyce, but whose source is Newman, and there’s lots of other figures around Joyce before and after, including Hopkins and Flann O’Brien who seem to fit this particular aesthetic.”

“Centuries from now, historians might wonder not why did De Valera kiss Archbishop McQuaid’s ring, but rather why did the priests allow the State to hijack the Church for a secular project”

It’s a very different tradition of Catholic writing than has been distinctive of modern Britain, a literature of conversion similarly drawing from Newman but exemplified by such writers as G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and Muriel Sparke, but it nonetheless points to Ireland having had a lay intelligentsia of Catholic writers.

“They were all lay people, all from Catholic families, and they all had this idea that if you’d a strong belief in God you could afford to be playful about Faith and belief,” he says.

“You could hold it with a degree of not mockery, but playfulness, like medieval monks did making doodles in the margins of their poems or even medieval theology students who could be quite blasphemous because the belief itself was so strong it could survive the blasphemy, that sort of thing.”

This tradition harks back to older Gaelic texts which are playful to the point of sacrilegious in their treatment of saints and the Church, he says, with this being possible because the faith itself was rock-solid.

“I think in a way that’s how I see Joyce and those writers, as part of that inbuilt critique, rather than thinking he’s gone agnostic or anti-Catholic. I really see him as part of a loyal internal opposition,” he says.

* * * * *

Joyce’s internal opposition seems to have in large part come from

Oscar Wilde.



a suspicion that too many Irish priests were functionaries – even good-hearted ones – without a real belief in the Faith they purported to uphold, Prof. Kiberd explains.

“It does strike me that the Catholic Church, in the absence of economic justice in the 19th Century or even from the time of the Penal Laws had to function as a kind of welfare state for the community, and had to provide hospitals, education, etc., and while that was compassionate and necessary, by the time of the actual State being set up, it got them caught up in a series of unfortunate relationships from which they’re still not recovering,” he says.

Centuries from now, he speculates, historians might wonder not why did De Valera kiss Archbishop McQuaid’s ring, but rather why did the priests allow the State to hijack the Church for a secular project.

Bureaucrats

“This is what I mean by saying that Joyce believed in it more than they did,” he says. “I think in the end he regarded a lot of the priests as kind of bureaucrats, you know, that priest who gives a retreat for businessmen in a story in *Dubliners* called ‘Grace’ and tells them to regard him as their spiritual accountant, and I think that what Joyce is saying is that these were almost like Kafka bureaucrats, decent men trying to do their best, but utterly in most cases devoid of spirit or vision or a sense of the otherworld, which I think Joyce did have.

“In other words, he’s probably aware that they’re powerful institutionally and that some of their power is a result of certain ideals they have, but they’re deficient in terms of vision, most of them. Now, that wouldn’t be true of all of them – you wouldn’t want to generalise – but there’s a sense in which they settled for power rather than authority, maybe, and

for social compassion rather than vision.”

While Irish literature has been too often marked in recent decades by writers “posing as a persecuted minority, when often in fact they hold the reins of discursive power”, he thinks that things may be changing, pointing to how the poetry of the Cardiff-based Ailbhe Darcy “fills her poems with what you might almost call lost objects of previous Catholicism, sacred objects which have been evacuated of meaning for this generation, but which meant something to your grandmother”.

“She will reinvigorate these as a poet, as part of her poetry-writing act,” he continues. “It’s a kind of Catholicism which is unmoored from all the old repressive ethical denunciation of sexual licence etc., but is connected to something more visionary to do with the power of these images.”

The ultimate exhibit of this, he says, is the playwright Conor McPherson, who he describes as both playful and extraordinarily visionary.

“He has a sacred heart lamp in that play *The Seafarer*, which actually ends with four slightly drunk, slightly hopeless middle-aged machomen, Nick Hornby readers, going off to an early Mass. I never thought,” he says, “an award-winning, switched-on Irish play by maybe the main current playwright would end with the main characters on the stage going off to Mass.”

Prof. Kiberd will be speaking on ‘Newman: A Saint for Today’ in the Notre Dame Centre for Faith and Reason at Dublin’s University Church on Sunday, October 20, following a Mass of thanksgiving celebrated by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin for John Henry Newman’s canonisation

The hinge of creation



Conscience was for Newman the connecting principle between man and God, writes **Fr Stuart P. Chalmers**

Blessed John Henry Newman is often quoted in relation to his toast to conscience and its dignity. However, at times the quote from his Letter to the Duke of Norfolk is misrepresented as if it were placing conscience and the Pope's teaching at odds. However, this is not the case.

Newman's canonisation provides us with an opportunity to get to know his rich writing more deeply. Here I can only touch the surface, but let us explore a little of Newman's writing so we can appreciate more clearly how he understood the role of conscience and that of the Magisterium, the teaching office of the Church.

Cardinal Newman sees conscience as a human capacity of perception, capable of both reflecting on the world around us and on what we are called to do in the world by the One who made it. Therefore, Newman sees conscience as a way-in to assenting to the reality of God, but then also as the means to understanding God's will in our lives. Conscience for Newman thus becomes the hinge between us and God, both in our being and our moral action. He writes, "Thus, conscience is a connecting principle between the creature and his Creator."

Inference

This might, at first seem naïve - is the inference that there is a God so obvious? Clearly there are many who would not come to Newman's conclusion. But Newman argues quite clearly that we make this assent to God's existence, only "if we will"; if we choose to do so, having overcome objections in our own heart and the contradictory voices and opinions around us.

Newman sees our moral instinct (conscience) as intrinsically linked to our created relationship with God, who is the ground for both the existence and morality of things. Thus, it is through conscience as a type of first principle that we can both search for the 'Hidden God', and arrive at a real, personal assent of Faith in a Divine Sovereign and Judge, rather than some notional, abstract concept of a God.

Conscience is a rational capacity – we think things through. But Newman



opposes the idea that it operates by some kind of strict deductive reasoning alone, reaching a particular conclusion only via general principles, as was held by St Albert the Great, St Thomas Aquinas and their successors.

By contrast, for Newman, there is both induction and deduction in moral reasoning. Indeed, rather than operating only by strict logical deduction, he says we also use the "subtle and elastic logic of thought." By this he means that we can come to a swift (rational) conclusion without always having to set out all the steps. Thus, Newman talks of this "natural or material inference" as an "intuition," or an "instinctive apprehension" about what is right. It is this natural capacity of right judgment in reasoning that he calls the 'illative sense'.

Taken on its own, Newman's statement that the illative sense, (our natural capacity of right judgment in reasoning) is "the authoritative oracle" could easily

be misunderstood to mean that conscience is the ultimate moral norm; the last word in moral decision-making.

Remorse

However, Newman is clear that conscience is subject to God's law and properly functions only when in right relationship with him. Related to this, he also saw emotion (supported by the intellect) as an essential part of conscience. Not only are the reactions of remorse and satisfaction intimately connected to emotion, but he states that one is unable to have these reactions unless they are a response to a "living object", that is another personal subject, and the ultimate living object is God. Newman therefore highlights the essential relational quality of conscience.

Conscience is therefore rational, emotional, and relational or rooted in our created nature. However, beyond this, Newman also points out that our conscience is called to

reflect Christ, the Priest, Prophet and King.

"Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ, a prophet in its information, a monarch in its pre-emptoriness, a priest in its blessings and anathemas, and even though the eternal priesthood through the Church could cease to be, in it [conscience] the sacerdotal principle would remain and would have a sway."

“For Newman, there is both induction and deduction in moral reasoning”

This calling blossoms through grace in Baptism, but the Holy Spirit, sent by Christ the high priest, is already incessantly active everywhere and for everyone, prompting all to respond to God's law which has been planted in every heart (Romans 2:14-15). Our origin and eternal goal are

to be found in God, and our moral choices are called to reflect that origin (creation) and goal (eternal beatitude through Christ's death and resurrection). Thus, we are called to seek to live and love as Christ would have us do. However, the awareness that conscience possesses of our origin and goal is either helped or hindered by our environment.

Therefore, while Blessed John Henry Newman emphasised the dignity of the individual's conscience, at the same time he railed against the "counterfeit" notion of subjectivist conscience, based upon the "right of self-will", calling people to recognise the individual's need for help in moral decision making.

It is in this context that one can properly understand Newman's toast where he would "drink, – to the Pope, if you please, – still, to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards," since conscience "is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ."

“Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ, a prophet in its information, a monarch in its pre-emptoriness, a priest in its blessings”

Yet, at the same time, despite its central importance, conscience as "the sense of right and wrong ... is so delicate, so fitful, so easily puzzled, obscured, perverted, so subtle in its argumentative methods, so impressible by education, so biased by pride and passion, so unsteady in its course, that, in the struggle for existence amid the various exercises and triumphs of the human intellect, this sense is at once the highest of all teachers, yet the least luminous; and the Church, the Pope, the Hierarchy are, in the Divine purpose the supply of an urgent demand," namely, that of support and assistance in revealing the truth of God's Law.

Thus conscience and Church are not acting in opposition or are to be seen as opposing choices. Rather, conscience and the Church as a whole, the individual in the Communion of all the Faithful, seek to act in harmony to do God's will, united as the Body of Christ.

Thus, Newman toasts conscience first, as it is the first to reveal God's will, but it is the task of the Pope and the Magisterium to do the same and to support conscience in doing so. Thus, he likewise toasts the Pope.

① Fr Stuart Chalmers is a priest of the Diocese of Aberdeen and presently the Spiritual Director of the Royal Scots College, Salamanca, Spain. For his research on conscience he was awarded a PhD from St Patrick's College, Maynooth. He is author of *Conscience in Context*, 2014.

“Newman is clear that conscience is subject to God's law and properly functions only when in right relationship with him. Related to this, he also saw emotion as an essential part of conscience”

Letters

Post to: Letters to the Editor, The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2,
or email: letters@irishcatholic.ie

Letter of the week

Greta's campaign consistent with Bible

Dear Editor, I was pleased to read an article in your publication (IC 03/10/19) praising the efforts of climate activist Greta Thunberg. Despite her age, this young girl has rallied countries and political leaders around the world to be more environmentally conscious and shed light on how detrimental our current carbon consumption really is.

At just 16 years old in the face of a disability, she has stood in front of world leaders and demanded that they change their ways. That's brave.

The author of the piece, however, outlines that her noble actions have been derided by many.

"She has been called a puppet of the left, insulted and belittled based on her appearance, her Asperger's, and the highly emotional manner in which she delivered her speech.

"She's been told to sit down, to go home and take a walk in the park, to leave the business of worrying to the adults."

Why the hate and vitriol? Why demonise someone who is only trying to make the world a better place? Even if she is wrong about the apocalyptic future we are heading towards – which is a big 'if' given the clear scientific consensus pointing in that direction – isn't she still

making a positive impact? Isn't she still helping us by raising awareness about sustainability, the effects that pollution can have on environment, and that we are all called to be stewards of the planet?

For those believers who are doubtful of their ecological responsibilities, remember that the Book of Genesis instructs humanity to take care of the planet. Animals, insects and vegetation are all part of God's creation – not materials to be abused.

*Yours etc.,
Martha McCarron,
Newry, Co. Down.*

facebook community

Each week we publish a selection of comments from *The Irish Catholic* Facebook page

Politicians criticised for ignoring Garda Commissioner on 'Safe Access Zones'

Imagine shamelessly wanting political policing in this day and age! Their goal appears to be some sort of secular "theocracy". – **Charles Glenn**

I think it's needed. Some of the protests outside the maternity hospitals have been deplorable. There was a group outside with a little small child coffin. Desperate stuff altogether. – **Amy Bebbington**

Politicians will hold the populist line as they see it and will shift to suit them. The police force has to hold the line upholding our laws. They get little thanks and suffer attacks from time to time, disgraceful, creates anarchy. – **Tim O'Leary**

And the climate crowd have actually said they are going to cause trouble in Dublin during their protests and not a word about exclusion zones. – **Daragh Harmon**

Truth and lies over euthanasia

God already has a plan in place for us, a time to be born and a time to die; let Him decide! – **Cynthia Neary**

I find a perverse irony, in that life in Ireland may be flanked by a "right to die" at the end of life, whereas a "right to live" evades the onset of life, and all in the name of equality. – **Ó Dubhghaill Uinsionn**

Four new novices receive their habits

God bless you all. Our Lady and St Dominic be with you all and protect your vocations. – **Mary King**

God Bless you all. We will keep you in our prayers for your vocations. – **Kathleen McIntyre**

A snapshot of Faith alive in Rome

"Name after name, symbol after symbol carved into stone filled me with inspiration as I pondered upon their heroic witness." A great piece by Mark Caffrey on our recent pilgrimage to Rome! – **Fr Conor McDonough OP**

During Brexit storm, UK's effort to protect religious freedom fly under the radar

Just to be technical, Lord Ahmad, unlike his successor, is a member of the Ahmadiyya movement which is not regarded as Muslim by other groups. It is like the difference between Catholics and Mormons. – **Declan McSweeney**

What do you think? Join in the conversation on *The Irish Catholic* Facebook page

Letters to the Editor

All letters should include the writer's full name, postal address and telephone numbers (day and evening). Letter writers may receive a subsequent telephone call from *The Irish Catholic* as part of our authentication process which does not amount to a commitment to publish.

We regret that we cannot give prior notice of a letter's publication date, acknowledge unpublished letters or discuss the

merits of letters. We do not publish pseudonyms or other formulae to conceal the writer's identity, such as "name and address with editor". We do not print letters addressed to someone else, open letters, or verse. Letters to the Editor should only be sent to *The Irish Catholic*, and not other publications. Letters should not exceed 300 words and may be shortened for space requirements.

Isn't it time to talk about euthanasia in Ireland?

Dear Editor, Mary Kenny writes that the next moral talking point in Ireland will be about euthanasia (IC 03/10/19). Regardless of religious belief, this topic is a sticking point for most people, especially if you have watched a loved one die after a long spout of suffering or pain.

I think this country needs

to have a conversation around euthanasia and make sure it doesn't reduce down to two polarising teams on either side of the issue. It's a very complex and nuanced topic. For example, Ms Kenny rightly notes that in the Catholic tradition, the teaching of double effect can come into play. While high morphine doses increases

the likelihood of inducing death, the intention is to alleviate the pain and so the act is morally fine.

The Church is insistent that people should live up until their natural deaths. But what does natural even mean?

We have medicines and surgeries that prevent death, but had they not been

invented those in need of such medical interventions would have died long ago naturally. It doesn't make sense that we can extend our natural life span but can't cut it short.

*Yours etc.,
James Feenan,
Belfast,
Co. Antrim.*

Trócaire must fight the right battles

Dear Editor, The CEO of Trócaire has said that the Government is contradicting its climate change policy after Leo Varadkar opened a renovated runway in Knock airport the day after a global climate strike (IC 26/09/19). I appreciate the sentiment from Trócaire but I do find it slightly ridiculous.

All of us use aeroplanes to travel even those who work in Trócaire. The renovation should be applauded, rather than criticised for some virtue-signalling publicity.

Are Trócaire going to condemn all politicians who drive to work rather than getting a bus? Learn to fight the right battles.

*Yours etc.,
Peter Anderson,
Naas,
Co. Kildare.*



Change has potential to work both ways

Dear Editor, It's been 40 years since Pope St John Paul II visited Ireland and I think for those who remember the event, it can be jarring to reflect on how much this country has changed. Millions turned up to see the Pope in Phoenix Park in 1979, enthused by their Faith and eager to hear what this holy man would say.

Contrast that with last year when less than 200,000 showed in up for Francis. Ireland has always been associated with Catholicism, but I think this connection

is dwindling away.

A lot has changed in those 40 years: the clerical abuse revelations, the internet, popular atheistic movements, and move back towards communism/socialism. All of these factors and many more have altered how we understand religion and what role it plays in our everyday lives.

If anyone had told you 40 years ago that the Catholic demographic would be the outlier in Ireland today, there's no chance you would have believed them.

But here we are.

Yet there is hope. If Ireland can change so rapidly in 40 years, there's no reason to think that down the line it can't speedily transform itself into a country that embraces religion once more.

*Yours etc.,
Patrick Brady,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24.*



BookReviews



Peter Costello

The life-long literary vocation

Peter Costello

Many saints have written on spirituality or theology. But few have been what John Henry Newman was, a writer by vocation, the author of lasting works in a wide variety of genres.

The seeds of his sainthood, indeed the full flowering of his sainthood, are to be found in his writings, the whole range of which very few of his admirers can be acquainted. Indeed, one has sometimes to wonder if it was not the sheer volume and breath of what Newman wrote during his long life that made those who dealt with the matter of his cause at Rome delay his canonisation for so long.

Many saints have also written and published books. That in some ways is no real achievement. But Newman was something more: all his life he was a writer by nature and inclination. His pen it seems was never out of his hand. His true metier was literature.

In this week's books page we will provide a brief overview of these writings, which will hopefully encourage readers of all points of view to explore them.

My first real encounter in depth with the writings of Newman — aside from a couple of essays read at school — was at my American university in the honours course in English which I was taking, where he was presented to a very varied student body, along with Ruskin, Mathew Arnold and Wordsworth, as one of the giants of Victorian literature. This indeed he was, but as the ceremonies in Rome on Sunday will merely confirm, he was also a great deal more.

As other contributors are dealing with the chronological developments in Newman's life, here my remarks will be arranged under literary categories, which will try to treat Newman's career as a continuity of a Christian writer's intellect, albeit one divided into two main parts, his years of growth as an Anglican (1801-1846), and his mature years as a Catholic (1846-1890).

The poet and hymn writer

He was a skilled poet and hymn writer. Elgar's choral work of 1900 based on Newman's long poem *The Dream of Gerontius* (1865) is still widely performed and enjoyed. For some people this would have been enough to fill a life. But for Newman poetry was a mere corner of his work, which he turned to from time to time, to give his thoughts

and feelings a special treatment. I have often felt that his hymns retain something of the Anglican manner in their style. But in these days that is not fault, but merely an added interest.

Yet one of his hymns can truly be said to have entered the popular culture of the English-speaking world — it was sung on the listing deck of the sinking Titanic. This is *Lead Kindly Light*, written in 1833 when he was becalmed for a week off the coast of Corsica in a mood of deep discouragement and anxiety. It has struck a chord with many over the decades and still does.

*Lead, kindly light, amidst th'
encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from
home,
Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to
see
The distant scene; one step enough
for me ...*

Newman the novelist

The historical novel was the great literary invention of the 19th Century.

Created by Walter Scott with *Waverley* (1814), a tale of the Jacobite rising out in 1745, it aided individuals, and indeed whole communities, come to an appreciation of their history and of the religion or politics they followed.

They were written by surprising people. The author of *Ben Hur* (1880), for instance, Lew Wallace, was a US

army general and governor of New Mexico. It proved to be one of the great popular successes of all time, selling many millions of copies and remains in print to this day.

“For Newman the historical novel was a vital form of communication, using a form of entertainment to achieve emotional understanding”

One might mention too other novels about the history of Christianity: Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* (1896) and Cardinal Wiseman's *Fabiola* (1854), a novel of the Church of the Martyrs, are well known. Newman's novel, *Callista*: a tale of the third century (1855) was a sort prequel to Wiseman's book.

But *Callista* is not just a period piece, for the novel in its presenta-



Newman and Joyce

James Joyce was an admirer of what he called Newman's "silver-veined" prose. Today his name and that of Gerard Manley Hopkins are linked with the saint's on a plaque outside Newman house (now the setting for a new museum dedicated to Irish literature). But the extent of Joyce's admiration for Newman was limited.

It has been shown that all of the quotations and allusions to Newman in Joyce's work come from one

book *Characteristics* from the writings of J. H. Newman (1885), selected by W. S. Lilly, a dumpy anthology of extracts, which had a very wide sale in its time.

This shows two things. One that Joyce was perhaps less deeply read than some imagine, and two, that Newman's influence in his lifetime seeped into many corners of life where we might not expect to find it. Through this volume Newman was read and appreciated by many who were not Catholics.

tion of denial, faith and acceptance reveals much about Newman's own outlook. Anyone seriously interested in Newman should read it at least once.

But though they both had beautiful heroines, Wiseman also had gladiators, which led to his book being filmed three times. Newman's novel, so far as I can discover never reached the screen; it was too intellectual. But it was, nevertheless, a popular success and remained in print into the first decade of the last century, with a occasional reprints since.

Ordinary readers cannot be expected to give attention to learned theological controversies. But historical novels expressing a Catholic point of view allowed a great many people to make contact with what had been in so many ways a form of outlawed thought in Britain down to 1829, to understand a little of what the restoration of the English hierarchy in 1850 meant for their Catholic compatriots. For Newman the historical novel was a vital form

of communication, using a form of entertainment to achieve emotional understanding.

This was not Newman's only novel. Earlier, just after his conversion, he had written *Loss and Gain* (1848), a philosophical novel dealing with the nature of religious experience. This too was a very typical product of the century, but it did not prove as popular as his later novel. Yet it inevitably cast a great deal of light on the development of Newman's own religious ideas, drawn as it was directly from his own experiences at Oxford. While important for Newman's life, the novel is also interesting for the revelations of the high seriousness with which the Victorians took religious belief, and how doubt as much as faith prevailed in the hearts of many, especially in the Tractarian era (1833-1841).

The controversialist

Perhaps Newman's most widely known book is his *Apologia Pro*

Vita Sua (1864). This account of the growth of his religious opinions has long been the book most familiar to readers of Newman, and it has indeed a special place in Victorian literature.

It arose from a controversy initiated by the 'muscular Christian' Charles Kingsley (author *Westward Ho!*, a book once placed on the Index because of the excesses of its anti-Catholic comments). Kingsley claimed that Newman taught that truthfulness was not necessary quality in a priest.

He presented Newman with an opportunity to explain not just to Kingsley, who was well beyond persuasion, but to the wider world, the nature both of Catholic belief as he had experienced it and the nature of the priestly vocation as he saw it.

At the present day when the discussion of belief is often carried on at a very shallow level Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* remains a pre-eminent piece of literary expression.

Readers should note that *The Irish Catholic* circulates throughout the island of Ireland and the book prices listed are the retail price recommended by the Irish or British publishers, in either euros or sterling, as a general indication of what purchasers may expect to pay.

of John Henry Newman

Newman the historian

Newman was at the beginning of his career an historian of early Christianity, for it was in those first centuries that many of the Church's fundamental doctrines were forged, not so much from the gospels, as from the difficulties in establishing a common set of beliefs, coherent with Greek philosophy, for all Christians – a task which still proves difficult today.

Newman's monograph *The Arians in the Fourth Century* appeared in 1833. This was one of many historical or quasi-historical writings, but in everything he wrote the historical ideal of knowing when and how things happened, and why, underlay every aspect of his thought.

Later, after he had become a Catholic, he remarked about the course the work followed: "I saw clearly that in the history of Arianism, the pure Arians were the Protestants, the semi-Arians were the Anglicans and that Rome now was what it was then. The truth lay, not with the via media, but with what was called the 'extreme party'."

His inquiry into Arianism was a key step on his path to Rome.

The Anglican theologian

Today we still hear people speak about the "unchanging doctrines" of the Church. Would it were that simple. In the early 19th Century biologists still believed in the immutability of species. This idea was shattered by the publication in 1859 of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Life, he observed, can be seen to be a developing matter, getting more complicated and more deeper, so to speak as times advances, from simple organisms to complex ones.

“Through his historical and doctrinal studies Newman now found that he could no longer remain within the Anglican fold”

Fourteen years before that in *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), Newman had written of "the development of doctrine", how over time the Church's understanding of its teaching, through the efforts of theologians, changed and deepened. What had been understood in an earlier century was still true, but now theologians, and hence the faithful, could have a deeper, more refined understanding of it.

This was, so to speak, 'Darwinism' in the cloister *avant l'heure* of Dar-



University Church, Dublin.

Newman and architecture

● When Newman lived in Ireland, the Catholic Church emerging from the long years of what was seen as 'penal servitude' was engaged on a church building drive that would go on for decades across the country. In this realm of church architecture Newman also attempted to make a contribution, but one which like his idea for a Catholic University was rejected in spirit by the Irish hierarchy. As we can see around us, the 19th Century church preferred a sort of inspirational

gothic style – this can be found everywhere.

Newman, through the work of John Hungerford Pollen at University Church, attempted to introduce an appreciation of the Byzantine style. Though occasional secular buildings in this style (derived in part from Ruskin's writing about Venice) can be seen in Dublin, University Church remained almost unique. It is a symbol of Ireland's rejection of much that lay at the heart of Newman's vision of man and God.



Newman's desk at Birmingham.

win himself.

Through his historical and doctrinal studies Newman now found that he could no longer remain within the Anglican fold. He would have to seek a new shepherd in the pastor of Rome. Essentially this book argued Newman out of his position as a High Church Anglican espousing the Catholic tradition, forcing him to make the next step and simply abandon what he had come to feel was only a limited position.

He left Littlemore and sought acceptance into the Catholic Church. Though perhaps not so obvious to modern readers this was not just a step for one man: it was a positive move towards the emergence of the Catholic Church as an accepted part

of English society once again. His passage into the Church of Rome in 1846 was a momentous moment not only in his life, but in the intellectual history of Victorian England.

The Catholic theologian

In the *Apologia* Newman had provided an account of the evolution of his own religious views. Over some 20 years he worked on *A Grammar of Assent* (1870). Here he developed his ideas that formal logic (such as is so often invoked by many modern scientists) was not applicable in all real life situations. He argued that it was possible to assent to a proposition without in fact understanding it. This book would become a key work in his lifetime's work, and remains one of two or three most influential books.

Newman the correspondent

From an early age Newman was a tireless correspondent. The letter was then the most urgent way of keeping in touch with family, friends and disciples. His correspondence went on to the end of his life in 1890 – he was born in February 1801 – Newman was a great letter writer, for the letter was the only reliable form of communications with his friends and colleagues in the British Isles and elsewhere.

The publication of his correspondence is one of the great publishing enterprises of the present day. It was initiated under the supervision of the Oratorian fathers to be published originally by Longman, and is now in the hands of the Oxford University Press. It began, given the peculiar circumstances of Newman's life and career, with a 'Catholic series' which ran from 1845 down to his death.

When that was completed (is so far as a project of this kind is ever complete), the editors turned back to the beginning of his life with an 'Anglican series'. In any relevant library these volumes occupy, as may be imagined, a great many shelves.

It is no disrespect to the eminent writers who have provided critical biographies of Newman, that his real biography, the true account of the struggles and resolutions of his life is to be found in these massed volumes. Anything else is, in reality a mere epitome, and for those who would try know the man these volumes are what have to be read. These papers will have inevitably formed a major part of the documentation which those dealing with his cause in Rome will have examined.

In these one can hear the essential voice, manner and spirit of the man – and in them from now on his admirers and others will be able to see the slow emergence not just of the man, or the intellectual, but of the saint.

Essentially, in what he wrote through the course of his life Newman pleaded his own cause for canonisation.

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The Irish Catholic

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No. of insertions:	_____ weeks
Miracle Prayer	€40

Please print your advertisement in the coupon, placing ONE word in each space. Below, please print your name and address. Do you require a Box Number? YES NO (Please tick) Box Number €6 extra.

1					€24.60
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					€29.52
7					€34.44

Name and contact detail form MUST be filled out

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Address
Landline Mobile

I enclose Cheque/PO: €..... I wish to pay by Visa Mastercard Laser

My Visa/Mastercard/Lasercard number is:

.....

Expiry Date: Signature

The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2.

Phone: 01 687 4094

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Contact our Fundraising Department in strictest confidence

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Email: info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie




Everything Family & Life does to save babies and strengthen the family relies on you and our other generous friends. This work has never been more needed.

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For further advice or to avail of our Solicitor's free Wills service, please contact us today on **01-8552790**

Family & Life
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Ph: 01 8552790 | email: fandi@iol.ie
www.familyandlife.org
www.prolife.ie

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Missionaries of the Sacred Heart bring hope to the poorest people living in over 48 countries worldwide.

Please help us with a gift in your Will

Contact:
MSC Missions Office, PO Box 23 Western Road, Cork.
Tel: 021-4545704 Email: info@mscmissions.ie
www.mscmissions.ie

When you remember Trócaire in your Will, you bring hope to people living in the world's poorest places

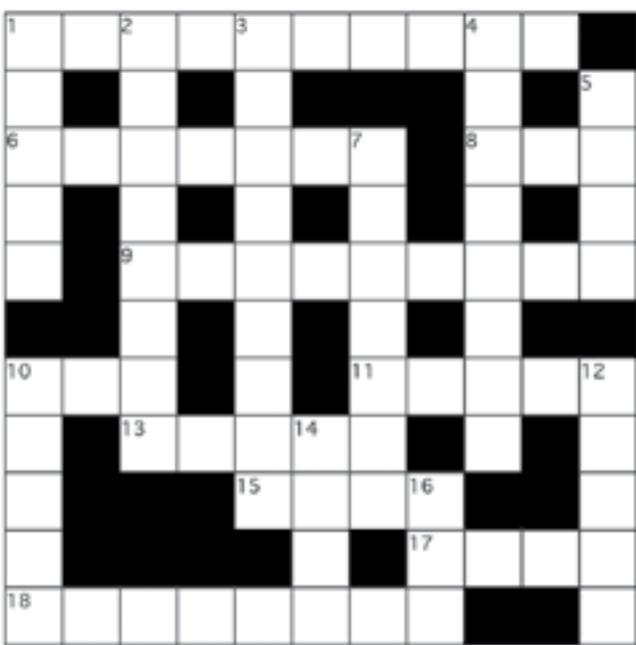
It's easy to get started, and we'll help you every step of the way. Call **Grace Kelly** on 01 629 3333, email grace.kelly@trocaire.org or write to me at Trócaire, Maynooth, Co Kildare.

One day, parents and their children will tell the story of how your legacy of love changed their lives.

Thank you for considering a gift to Trócaire in your Will.

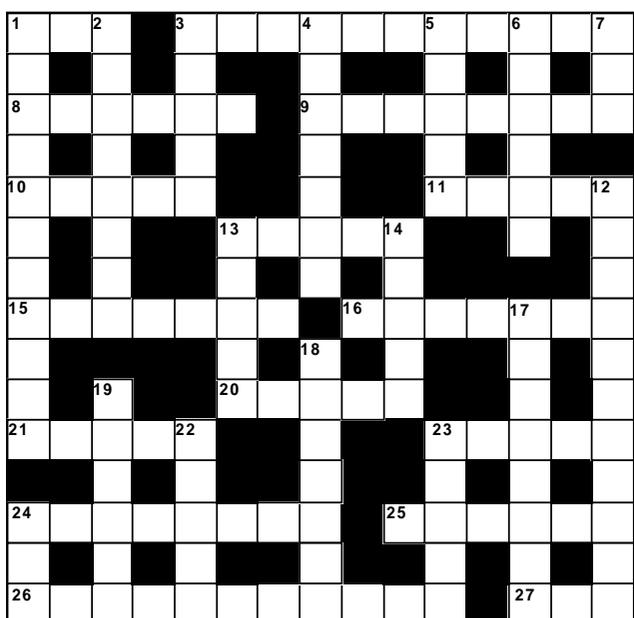


Crossword Junior Gordius 303



- ACROSS**
- 1 A man on his wedding day (10)
 - 6 Find out exactly how big something is (7)
 - 8 Frozen water (3)
 - 9 Not wanting to wait for something (9)
 - 10 Female deer (3)
 - 11 Fool (5)
 - 13 'I don't understand that - it makes no _____' (5)
 - 15 Hard or important job (4)
 - 17 Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of _____ (4)
 - 18 8 across is like this; so is a banana skin (7)
- DOWN**
- 1 'After the fall I was covered in _____ and bruises' (5)
 - 2 Dreams up (8)
 - 3 Kit (9)
 - 4 We might cook something with this liquid (5,3)
 - 5 Beef or mutton, perhaps (4)
 - 7 'There were lots of _____ in the competition' (7)
 - 10 Sketches, makes a picture (5)
 - 12 Use your brain (5)
 - 14 Put money aside for later (4)
 - 16 Use it to open a lock (3)

Crossword Gordius 424



- ACROSS**
- 1 The young of a wolf (3)
 - 3 One who trades in environment-friendly commodities? (11)
 - 8 A young woman might help (with chaps around) (6)
 - 9 Announce publicly (8)
 - 10 & 19d The overdevelopment of a city - or the way a historic pope may lie comfortably? (5,6)
 - 11 He gets jolly as a standard for pirates (5)
 - 13 The deciding match in a knockout tournament (5)
 - 15 As noon arrived, one got changed (7)
 - 16 Wound a defender to achieve a reduction in expenditure (7)
 - 20 Curtain (5)
 - 21 & 6d Explosive fee levied by Department H? (5,6)
 - 23 Members of a gaggle (5)
 - 24 The major part of Turkey, also known as Asia Minor (8)
 - 25 Material from some musical I composed (6)
 - 26 Fails to keep up with cataract to the rear (5,6)
 - 27 Equipment (3)
- DOWN**
- 1 How one faced a mogul (attired so as to blend in) (11)
 - 2 The state capital of Queensland (8)
 - 3 Harvest what other harvesters have left behind (5)
 - 4 Give a talk on giving one's old flame a hundred pence (7)
 - 5 It may happen again that the curer is confused (5)
 - 6 See 21 across
 - 7 The odd drink (3)
 - 12 With stone, the craft is to upset the equilibrium (4,3,4)
 - 13 Unit of land within a farm (5)
 - 14 Remove the top of a garment for the pest (5)
 - 17 The star of the publishing world (8)
 - 18 On which day graduates turn up at a city in Somerset? (7)
 - 19 See 10 across
 - 22 Feature of a Shamrock Rovers or Glasgow Celtic jersey (5)
 - 23 Thousand (5)
 - 24 He appears to be fifty per cent Cockney (3)

SOLUTIONS, OCTOBER 3

GORDIUS No. 423

Across - 1 Dew 3 Casting vote 8 Shovel 9 Primrose 10 Orbit 11 Screw 13 Swami 15 Reeking 16 Olympic Games 20 Psalm 21 Groat 23 Venus 24 Treasure chest 25 Esther 26 Gospel choir 27 Pew

Down - 1 Discovering 2 Woodbine 4 Topical 6 Odours 7 Exe 12 Witches' brew 13 Sunup 14 Islam 17 Pawnshop 18 Harlech 19 Yodels 22 Taste 23 Visor 24 Tug

CHILDREN'S No. 302

Across - 1 Beijing 5 Bus 7 Dancer 9 Wheels 11 Haka 12 Yellow 14 Mend 15 Jonathan 19 Taxi 20 Lemonade 21 Roll

Down - 2 Exam 3 Jack and Jill 4 Norway 6 Suds 8 Wealth 10 Hamster 13 Win 16 Name 17 Tent 18 Adds

Sudoku Corner 303

Easy

8	1		2	7	5		6	
			5	6			4	
4				3				
2	6	7	5		8			
1	3					2	5	
			2		1	8	6	3
			3					9
3			7	8				
9		2	6	1			4	7

Hard

	8			6		9		
6		2	3			4		
5			2			3		
1	4		5					
		7				3		
				6		2		4
	2				1			7
	9			8	4			5
4		9					6	

Last week's Easy 302

5	4	9	7	8	1	6	2	3
8	1	3	2	6	5	9	4	7
2	7	6	3	4	9	5	8	1
3	6	2	8	5	7	4	1	9
9	8	4	6	1	3	7	5	2
7	5	1	4	9	2	8	3	6
4	2	7	5	3	6	1	9	8
1	3	8	9	7	4	2	6	5
6	9	5	1	2	8	3	7	4

Last week's Hard 302

9	7	3	6	4	2	8	5	1
4	8	1	7	5	3	9	2	6
2	6	5	1	9	8	3	7	4
8	3	2	9	7	1	4	6	5
1	5	9	4	3	6	7	8	2
7	4	6	2	8	5	1	3	9
5	9	7	8	6	4	2	1	3
3	2	4	5	1	7	6	9	8
6	1	8	3	2	9	5	4	7



Notebook

Fr Bernard Cotter

The mark of a servile mind or one of family habit?

IS YOUR priest punctual; does he start Mass on time? If he does, have you arrived by then? This issue arises in every parish in Ireland, where Mass can begin in one of three ways; a little early, bang on time, or a little (or a lot) late.

There is a fourth possibility, which I observed in Africa. The local priest and I were at the church, where everything was ready at the appointed time – but no one else was there.

Across the countryside, we saw a large band of people a long way off, coming toward the church on foot, talking and singing. When these arrived, they continued to talk and sing.

Here was the fourth possibility for when Mass might start: it began when the people arrived (and there's a lot to be said for that too).

Punctuality, according to a colleague of mine, is "the hallmark of a servile mind". My friend quotes this approvingly, as punctuality is a foreign concept to him. Punctuality, he opines, is a sign of anger at one's father; 30 years of his being late for lunch appointments have taught me to recognise the habit of a lifetime,



not easily changed.

In each of the parishes where I have ministered, I've heard stories of the time-keeping of my predecessors.

One story concerning daily Mass was hilarious: "Father

● Newcestown is the parish in which I minister. In the far corner of its churchyard cemetery, a small plaque is attached to the wall: "In memory of an unknown travelling man buried nearby."

There is so much sadness in those few words, but it is a worthy thought that a group of parishioners sought to keep his memory alive. One of the traditions that has grown locally is that brides arrange that flowers are placed on his grave on their wedding day. There's a beauty to that kind of friendly gesture that always brings tears to my eyes.

sometimes started five minutes late, or ten, but if I arrived that late, the whole thing might be over!"

“Of course, even if I started exactly on time, the same few would dribble in between the Gloria and the Gospel”

In another parish, Sunday morning Masses were celebrated in two churches, 15 minutes apart. Father shared breakfast with a local family after 10am Mass. Then, at about 11.50am, he'd be seen in the village of the second church, buying sweets for the altar servers. Then he would amble over to the church – and start the 11.30 Mass.

He was fortunate to be a much-loved pastor, for whom everything

could be forgiven, though I would imagine the diocesan office was kept well informed of his timekeeping.

As for me, I try to start Mass on time, though I do not always succeed. On weekdays, the phone rings at the worst times, usually when I am dashing out the door.

On Sundays, first Mass is at 9.15am, which must start punctually. It's a matter of necessity, as second Mass in another church a few miles away is at 10.30am. The narrow roads between the two churches are often filled with Sunday-morning joggers and cyclists, while each Sacristy contains parishioners bearing Mass cards, and people needing to talk (and sometimes vent). Of course, even if I started exactly on time, the same few would dribble in between the Gloria and the Gospel.

My theory is that we learn punctuality (or lack of it) at home. My mother was always on time for Mass, but never early. My father was always early, at least ten minutes ahead of start-time. I slotted into the compromise between them. You think I am unpunctual? I blame my parents! It's probably your excuse too.

It all helps!

Every parish has its own characteristics, its distinguishing marks. One of the traditions in Newcestown is that the holy water fonts and the larger container are filled from a local holy well (which God has blessed through the ages).

The farmer who owns the land on which the well is situated is often seen transporting churns of this special water to our parish church. One day I commended his actions. His reply, delivered with a wry smile, spoke volumes: "Anything I can do to stop the devil 'picking at' the people of Newcestown, I will do!"

We need more people like him.



HELP TRAIN A LITTLE WAY SISTER OF ST THERESE IN MYANMAR

THE LITTLE WAY MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ST THERESE were founded in Burma by Archbishop Mang Thang with the assistance of the late Miss Mary Doohan, founder of The Little Way Association. The Sisters strive to teach the Faith and minister to the needs of those around them - especially the poor, the sick and the uneducated. In the few years that they have been in existence already more than 200 young women have come to dedicate their lives to God and the service of His people. They live and work in small communities that have been established in remote mountainous areas, where Jesus and His Gospel are unknown, as well as in the towns and more populated areas.



"My mission - to make God loved - will begin after my death. I will spend my heaven doing good on earth. I will let fall a shower of roses." - St Therese

MAY ST THERESE OBTAIN FOR ALL LITTLE WAY FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS A DAILY BLESSING FROM HEAVEN

In our modern age of materialism and selfishness, when so many are searching for an authentic spirituality, Therese's little way of simple love for God and others has a powerful appeal. Perhaps we too can join her on the 'little way'.

HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Please spare a thought for the thousands who die each year of hunger and disease in mission lands. Your donation will relieve the pangs of starvation, and every euro you send will be forwarded to a missionary for food and medicines for the hungry and sick.

Please can you help to train a novice or contribute towards a Sister's living costs?

Archbishop Mang Thang and the Sisters will be forever grateful to you for any donation you can send for their maintenance and for the upkeep of their religious houses. His Grace assures all benefactors of a daily share in his prayers.

HOLY MASS FOR YOUR INTENTIONS

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www.littlewayassociation.com

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€..... HUNGRY, SICK AND DEPRIVED

€..... NEEDS OF MISSIONARIES (G)

€..... LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES (A)

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