

Pope Benedict's Visit to the UK

Pope Benedict XVI will visit England and Scotland 16-19 September

When Pope Benedict arrives in the UK, he will visit Scotland where he will be received by Her Majesty The Queen, members of the Royal Family and people representing British society in the Palace of Holyrood House in Edinburgh.

Having met the Queen, the Pope will travel to Glasgow where he will celebrate an open-air Mass at Bellahouston Park in the evening and then he will fly from Glasgow to London. The Holy Father will then be based in London for the remainder of the visit.

On the second day of the visit, Pope Benedict is going to St Mary's University College, Twickenham, where there will be three aspects to his visit. The first is that he begins the day praying with representatives of religious congregations - particularly those who have a charism for education and a history of education.

He will then go and meet 3,000 young people - schoolchildren, students - to celebrate Catholic education. From there he will then meet with religious leaders and people of religious faith in the Waldegrave Drawing Room and Walpole House. He will discuss with them religion and belief in our society.

Later in the day, the Pope is scheduled to meet with the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace in the presence of the Anglican diocesan bishops and the Catholic diocesan bishops of England and Wales.

He has then been invited, as part of the State visit, to address British society. Representatives of British society will be invited to Westminster Hall to hear the Pope's address.

He will finish off the day with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Christian leaders at Westminster Abbey to celebrate Evening Prayer. The Holy Father will also pray at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior and also at the Shrine of St Edward the Confessor.

On the third day of the visit, Pope Benedict will celebrate Mass

in Westminster Cathedral where he will also, from there, greet the people of Wales.

Later in the day he will visit a home for older people, giving the Pope an opportunity to go to those who cannot meet with him, and then be present at an open air Vigil of prayer in London's Hyde Park.

The final day of the visit is focused very much on the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman, and the Pope will celebrate that beatification in Cofton Park in Birmingham - adjacent, fittingly, to Rednal where Cardinal Newman was buried and the place where Newman and his community came for rest and recreation in the Lickey Hills.

Pope Benedict will conclude the day by meeting with the bishops of England, Scotland and Wales in Oscott College before returning to Rome from Birmingham Airport.

The theme for Pope Benedict XVI's 2010 visit to the UK is *Cor ad cor loquitur* - Heart speaks unto heart. Cardinal John Henry Newman chose the words as the motto to go on his coat of arms. Heart speaks unto heart is a fitting choice for this papal visit as, on the final day of his Apostolic Journey, the Holy Father will beatify Cardinal Newman - the much-loved Victorian theologian.

Speaking about his hopes for the visit the visit, Archbishop Vincent Nichols said: 'If I had to sum up the hope for this Visit, and I believe a fundamental intention of the papacy of Pope Benedict XVI, it would be in this sentence: It is to show that faith in God is not a problem to be solved but a gift to be rediscovered.

'I think in many ways in our country we have got ourselves in a bit of a cul de sac of thinking that faith in God is nothing other than a problem to be solved, whereas I hope this Visit will help all of us to just remember again that in fact it is a gift, and one that inspires and moves people to often their greatest achievements and their greatest generosity.'

See www.thepapalvisit.org.uk
for more details

The Beatification

During his visit to the United Kingdom, Pope Benedict XVI will beatify John Henry Cardinal Newman on 19 September 2010 at Cofton Park, Birmingham. This occasion is undoubtedly one of great significance not only for the Roman Catholic Church in England but also for the Church worldwide. A great day of rejoicing for the Catholic Church in England, this beatification heralds the way for his possible canonisation which would render him the first figure to be made saint since the forty English martyrs of the Reformation in 1970. For the Church, this event is one of special interest given the Pope has chosen to beatify Newman personally, a decision which reflects his life-long interest of, and work on, Newman. In the wake of such an occasion, it is fitting to offer an account, albeit in brief fashion, of who Newman was, what he achieved and hence, how he came to possess this worthy position of ecclesial honour.

John Henry Newman was born on 21 February 1801 in London into an Anglican family of six. At the young age of fifteen Newman experienced a conversion of thought which led him to view Christianity as a profoundly dogmatic religion, a notion which he expressed in his *Apologia*, in the words, 'when I was fifteen (in the autumn of 1816) a great change of thought took place in me. I fell under the influence of a definite Creed, and received into my intellect impressions of dogma which, through God's mercy, have never been effaced or obscured.'¹ This conversion of thought led him to understand that Christianity existed as a revealed truth, a realisation that was to have a lasting impression on him. Newman proceeded to go up to Oxford in 1816 where he matriculated at Trinity College as a Commoner. On 8 June 1817 he took up residence there and in that same year, on 30 November, he received his first communion in the Church of England. The following year, he was elected a scholar of Trinity College. However, his final examinations in 1820 met with disaster as his results plummeted to the 'contemptuous title of "under-the-line".'² Nonetheless, this malperformance could be excused by the fact that Newman was only 19 years of age, having entered Oxford prematurely. In 1822 Newman took Orders in the Church of England, and eventually progressed to the position of deacon in 1824, and later priest in 1825.

His faith in the Anglican Church became the subject of doubt upon his encounter with the early Church Fathers. This study upon which he embarked, spurred him on to attempt the monstrous, arduous challenge of adapting the fundamental beliefs of the Church Fathers into the Anglican Church,

John Henry Newman

which would become the initial catalyst for the Oxford Movement. In sum, Newman's realisation that the Church of the Fathers was sacramental, dogmatic and hierarchical in principle did not fit neatly with the Anglican Church. This was a difficulty that would ultimately lead to Newman's 'move to Rome' and on 25 September 1843, he preached his last sermon as an Anglican, 'The Parting of the Ways' at Littlemore. He was received into the Church by Blessed Dominic Barberi, and confirmed by the then Bishop Wiseman.

Two years later in 1847 Cardinal Franzoni ordained Newman priest in Rome. When he returned to England he was granted permission to establish the oratory at Maryvale. Newman's career progressed with him being appointed Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland, now UCD, in 1854 and here he served until 1858. During his time in Dublin he founded the University Church at St Stephen's Green in 1856. The period between his rectorship at UCD in 1854 and his being elected Cardinal in 1879, witnessed the publication of his major works such as, 'On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine', an article which was controversially received, the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, his famous poem, *The Dream of Gerontius* which was later to become the text for Elgar's eponymous oratorio, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* and a *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*. In this time too, Newman was made Trinity College's first ever honorary fellow in 1877 which was, according to Michael Beloff QC, the college's president in a welcome address to Cardinal Lustiger at the Mass in Commemoration of Newman in the chapel of Trinity College on 13 May 2005, 'a symbolic gesture of the reconciliation between England's Catholics and Oxford's Anglican establishment which he himself had done so much to effect.'³ In the August of 1890 Newman was struck with pneumonia and died on 11 August.

Newman's achievement was and remains more than ever prevalent at and from the time of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. Interestingly, at an audience for the Luxembourg Newman Association in 1975, Pope Paul VI referred to the Council as 'Newman's hour'. Eric Przywara has also remarked that Newman was the 'peculiar and unique "Augustinus redivivus" of modern times'.⁴ At the time of the Council, Bishop Christopher Butler who was present as an advising theologian, described Newman as 'a voice crying in the wilderness of the English Catholicism of his day'. The documents of the Council reflect Newman's reverence for the Bible and his belief, which no doubt derived from his former Anglicanism, that 'Catholics should know their Bible'. Another salient key to interpreting Newman's thought as an

anticipation of Vatican II, is his reactions against the Ultramontanes at the time of the First Vatican Council regarding papal infallibility, 'Let us be patient, let us have faith, and a new Pope, and a reassembled Council may trim the boat.'⁵

The other great lasting contribution Newman made to the Church was his writings on the education of the laity. Newman made an urgent plea for the laity to be fully recognised in the Church and for them to be 'well-educated, well-catechised, and well-instructed'. He believed that it was the power of example rather than the ability to argue on matters of doctrine that would change people. Newman's evaluation of faith as both a matter of head and heart is a position that was exemplified most vividly in his theology of faith and revelation. Indeed, he believed that one was to impress 'upon their hearts the life of Our Lord and Saviour as given us in the Evangelists'.⁶ As much as Newman stressed the importance of the experiential character of revelation and faith, he did not do so at the expense of relegating the doctrinal and objective element. The motto he chose for his Cardinalate was *cor ad cor loquitur* - heart speaks unto heart, which evidently reflects his plea for faith to be impressed upon men's hearts. Newman's dynamic fusion of the objective and subjective elements of faith and revelation were remarkably achieved in his seminal work, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* wherein he distinguishes between the elements of the process of assent namely that of gaining authentic access to the mysteries of faith, that is 'real apprehension and real assent', and that of the theologian's exercise in the pursuit of understanding these mysteries of faith, to which he designated the term 'natural apprehension'.

Since the time of the Council, Newman studies have occupied a special place of interest among theologians and the laity. Notable Newman scholars include Ian T. Ker, Sheridan Gilley, Frank M. Turner, George W. Rutler, and Louis Bouyer to name only a few. Pope Benedict XVI has expressed a life long devotion to the work of the cardinal. In a greeting to his predecessor at the International Newman Symposium Benedict XVI recalled John Paul II's words from his homily at Coventry in 1982 regarding Newman, 'his quest for God and for the fullness of truth – a sign of the Holy Spirit at work within him – brought him to a prayerfulness and a wisdom which still inspires us today'.⁷ The then Cardinal Ratzinger spoke of Newman's greatness as possessing a worthy place among the calibre of the

early Fathers. Ratzinger mentioned that his own theological formation in the seminary in Freising was deeply influenced by Newman's theology of conscience, a theology that presents one's conscience as intrinsic to papal authority. As Newman wrote, 'the championship of the moral law and of conscience is [the Pope's] *raison d'être*'.⁸

On 22 January 1991 Newman was declared Venerable and so deemed to possess and practice the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. The cause for the canonisation was initially slow to germinate owing to reluctance on the part of the Oratorians, the suspicion with which his writings were treated in light of the Modernist crisis soon after his death and the political effects of the First World War.

The occasion for the beatification rests in the miraculous recovery, which Deacon Jack Sullivan made from spinal stenosis in 2001, Boston. The 71-year old deacon was suffering from a severe case of spinal stenosis, which carried a high risk of paralysis. Upon interceding with Cardinal Newman, the deacon's pain vanished coupled with a marvellous upsurge of strength, and as a result he was able to walk again, a recovery which baffled his doctors. After a thorough investigation of the cure, Vatican officials have accepted its miraculous credibility, which bears the fruit of Newman's beatification this September. Perhaps in a climate of turbulence, renewal and hope which the Church has witnessed in recent months, Blessed Newman's attitude to the future of Church should be kept at the forefront, that is, as summarised in the words of distinguished Newman scholar, Ian Ker that 'while Newman was open to new ideas he was extremely loyal to the authority and tradition of the Church'.⁹

NOTES

¹ John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (London: Dent, 1966), 31.

² Peter Jennings (ed.), *Benedict XVI and Cardinal Newman* (Oxford: Family Publications, 2005), 17.

³ Michael Beloff, 'Welcome Address to Cardinal Lustiger at the Mass to Commemorate John Henry Cardinal Newman', Trinity College Chapel, Oxford, 13 May 2005, cited in Jennings, Peter (ed.), *Benedict XVI and Cardinal Newman* (Oxford: Family Publications, 2005), 149.

⁴ Eric Przywara cited without reference in Charles S. Dessain, 'Newman Considered as Prophet,' *Concilium* 7/4 (1968): 41.

⁵ *Letters and Diaries*, vol. XXIV, 278, 310.

⁶ *LD*, XXVI, 87.

⁷ Pope John Paul II, 'Homily at Coventry,' *L'Osservatore Romano*, 31 May 1992 cited in Jennings, Peter (ed.), *Benedict XVI and Cardinal Newman* (Oxford: Family Publication, 2005), 27.

⁸ John Henry Newman, *Difficulties Felt By Anglicans in Catholic Teaching II*, pp. 250, 253 cited in Jennings, Peter (ed.), *Benedict XVI and Cardinal Newman* (Oxford: Family Publication, 2005), 24.

⁹ Simon Caldwell, 'Cardinal John Newman poised for beatification after ruling,' in *The Telegraph* 24 April, 2009 citing Ian Ker.