

Cardinal Newman - Assembly for secondary schools



You will need:

- Four readers
- Picture of Newman for OHP
- *Optional:* Video clip from a news report, or pages from news websites about the Pope's visit to Birmingham or the beatification of Cardinal Newman
- *Optional:* Reflective music

Introduction

This assembly reflects on the life of Cardinal John Henry Newman who will be beatified when Pope Benedict visits the UK in September 2010.

Project picture of Newman

Reader 1: A saint is a person the Church believes is in heaven because of the holy life he or she led. Part of the process of a person becoming recognised as a saint is their beatification. When Pope Benedict visits England in September this year, he will beatify Cardinal John Henry Newman. He will then be known as Blessed John Henry Newman.

Optional: Insert video clip/web pages here

(some suggested links which were live at time of producing this material. If this assembly is used after the beatification you can source news footage from the service in Coventry)

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/coventry_warwickshire/8576825.stm

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/articles/a0000773.shtml>

Cardinal Newman's Life

Reader 2: John Henry Newman was an English priest, Cardinal and poet. He was born in 1801 into a Christian family who were members of the Church of England and he went to school in London. At school he was described as a hard working student who also displayed good conduct. His happy childhood ended when a financial crisis caused his father's bank to close and Newman himself had a period of serious illness.

Reader 1: After studying at Oxford University, Newman became a priest in the Church of England. Newman was very critical of the Catholic Church as a young man but through the years, he became less and less hostile to the church. On October 9, 1845, Newman was received into the Roman Catholic Church. Newman had been ordained as an Anglican priest in 1825; he was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1847.

Reader 2: His work with the Church included establishing the Oratory of St. Philip Neri near Birmingham and helping to create the Catholic University of Ireland, which he served as rector for several years. Newman received special recognition for his work as both an Anglican and a Roman Catholic. In 1877 he became the first person elected to an honorary fellowship of Trinity College; two years later, Pope Leo XIII awarded him a place in the College of Cardinals. He died on August 11, 1890, and was buried in Warwickshire. The Latin phrase on his headstone means "out of shadows and pictures into truth."

Reader 3:

A Meditation by Cardinal Newman:

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 in the next. I am a link in His 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, 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 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.

(Pause)

Lord, help us to discover your dream for us, our mission and the purpose for which we were created

We ask this through Christ our Lord

All: Amen

Scripture and reflection

Reader 4: In the meditation we have just heard, written by Cardinal Newman, we are reminded that God has created each of us for a particular purpose and mission. We all have a vocation; we are all called to holiness and love. In the bible, we hear many stories in which God calls men and women to carry out some definite service. This scripture passage tells the story of the calling of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 6:8-9

Reader 1: Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,

Reader 2: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"

Reader 1: And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" He said,

Reader 2: "Go and tell this people: "Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

Bidding prayers

1: We pray for our Pope Benedict, our bishop N. and all the bishops in England and Wales. May they be wise and good shepherds to the people they lead. Lord hear us...

2: We pray for priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters; may they be faithful to their vocations. Lord hear us...

3: We pray for married people and all families that they may be a reflection of Christ's love. Lord hear us...

4: We pray that the beatification of Cardinal Newman will be a source of great joy to many. Lord hear us...

5: We pray for unity among all Christian people, especially fellowship and cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. Lord hear us...

6: We pray for ourselves that we will always seek to discover God's will for our lives. Lord hear us...

Reader 1: Let us end by praying together the Our Father. "Our Father..."

As the students leave the hall, reflective music could be played.

*For updates on the visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the United Kingdom, please visit the website
www.papalvisit.org.uk*