

## THE SPIRITUALITY OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

Convener: John R. Connolly, Loyola Marymount University  
 Moderator: Edward Jeremy Miller, Gwynedd-Mercy College  
 Presenter: John T. Ford, The Catholic University of America  
 Edward Enright, Merrimack College  
 Brian W. Hughes, University of Saint Mary, Kansas

This interest group is dedicated to the study of the spirituality of John Henry Newman and its significance for contemporary theology, the understanding of the mission of the Catholic Church today, and for the life of Catholic believers in the twenty-first century.

John Ford's paper, "Newman's *Apologia* as a Journal of his Conversions," focused on Newman's conversions as a context for understanding his spirituality. In the paper he outlined how the *Apologia* chronicles four of Newman's conversions: 1. his Evangelical Conversion; 2. his Noetic Conversion; 3. his Tractarian Conversion; and 4. his Roman Catholic Conversion. After summarizing some of the characteristics of Newman's conversions—conversion as a process, as complementary rather than contradictory, and as an exercise of the illative sense, the paper concluded that Newman's series of conversions provided the experiential basis and the theological format for his spiritual advice to directees and potential converts.

The second paper, presented by Edward Enright, was entitled, "The Role of the Prophets in Newman's Spiritual Teaching: *The Parochial and Plain Sermons*." The main thesis of Ed's paper was to demonstrate how Newman used the Hebrew prophets in his *Parochial and Plain Sermons*. Selecting various sermons based upon the liturgical year, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, the paper explained how Newman used passages from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, ten of the Twelve Minor Prophets, Lamentations, and Daniel. The paper concluded that it is in these sermons that the best of Newman's spiritual teaching can be found. Here too we find the seeds of much of his theological teaching, which cannot be separated from his spirituality. One of the major themes of Newman's spirituality that emerges in these sermons is his notion of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In the final paper, "Newman and the Communion of Saints," Brian Hughes argued that Newman's personal relationship to St. Philip tells us something significant spiritually for Christian life. Newman's relationship to St. Philip Neri provides a case study for Christians who desire to understand a personal and theological interpretation of the communion of saints. Specifically, this paper touched on three areas: 1. St. Philip and the method of personal influence; 2. how Newman understands the doctrine of the communion of saints; 3. what St. Philip's spiritual relationship to Newman meant as patron and friend. In the conclusion, the paper points out how Newman credits St. Philip with providing a clear direction for the method of personal influence upon his vocation, his duties, and his work. It also suggests that Newman's relationship to St. Philip as a friend fits coherently with this latent communion ecclesiology that undergirds Newman's

sermon on the communion of saints. The paper also concludes that the sacramental presence of past witnesses and models of Christian faith do support and influence the present day church vivified through the Holy Spirit.

The session was well attended (27 present) and there was ample time for questions and discussion. Since copies of the papers were sent out to the participants a week before the conference, each presenter spoke for only 15 minutes. Some of the insights significant for understanding Newman's spirituality that emerged from this session include the notion of change and development in Newman's holiness, the personal nature of Newman's conversion experience, the role of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the communion of saints, Newman's daily life, and the role of conscience. These ideas will provide a basis for future papers and discussion. Next year's program was discussed and some suggestions for improvement were made. It was decided to have a call for papers for next year's session.

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