

PRESS RELEASE: JULY 1ST 2019

POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES THAT BLESSED JOHN HENRY NEWMAN WILL BE CANONISED IN ROME ON SUNDAY 13 OCTOBER 2019.

The Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory are delighted to announce that Pope Francis will canonise Blessed John Henry Newman in St Peter's Square on Sunday 13 October 2019 alongside 4 others. This will make Cardinal Newman the first English person who has lived since the 17th century officially recognised as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was ordained as a Church of England priest and soon became the leader of the Oxford Movement but converted to Catholicism in 1845. He founded the Oratory in England and was later made a cardinal. When he died at the age of 89, more than 15,000 people lined the streets of Birmingham for his funeral.

Cardinal Newman is widely considered to be one of the most significant figures of the 19th century.

The cause for his sainthood was opened in 1958 and he was declared Venerable by Pope Saint John Paul II in 1991 after his life of 'heroic virtue' was recognised. Pope Benedict XVI declared him Blessed in Cofton Park near Birmingham in September 2010, as part of his historic visit to Britain.

The canonisation was made possible by a second miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed John Henry Newman, consisting in the medically inexplicable healing of a pregnant woman with life-threatening complications due to her pregnancy. The cure took place in Chicago, USA, in May 2013. After an initial investigation carried out by the archdiocese of Chicago, it was submitted to the Holy See in 2018, and approved by Pope Francis on 13 February 2019.

During the ceremony for his beatification in 2010, Pope Benedict said that Newman "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."

"The definite service to which Blessed John Henry was called," continued the Pope, "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

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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."

Fr Ignatius Harrison, Provost of the Birmingham Oratory which was founded by Newman in 1849, said that "Newman's lifelong success in bringing others to Christ shows us that the apostolate of Christian friendship achieves much more by *attracting* people to the Lord than by aggressive polemic. Newman's long and incremental spiritual pilgrimage shows us that God leads us to Himself step by step, in ways that He customises to our individual needs, and in His own good time."

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, said "This is a moment of great pride. On Friday it was the feast of the Sacred Heart and we held a mass for the priests of England and Wales. Foremost in our minds was the declaration of a saint who was a priest here. John Henry Newman is known for many great qualities, but we remember him particularly for the kindness and compassion of his ministry to the people of Birmingham. At his death they turned out in their thousands to salute a much loved priest on his funeral procession through the streets of Birmingham."

The other blessed to be canonised alongside Newman are Giuseppina Vannini, Mariam Theresia Chiramel Mankidiyan, Irmã Dulce Pontes and Marguerite Bays.

Information about Cardinal Newman including details of his life, of the miracle and the process of canonisation, links to his writings as well as photos and videos available to media, can be found at www.newmancanonisation.com

For further details or to arrange interviews contact

Jack Valero
Press and Media Coordinator
Newman Canonisation

media@newmancanonisation.com