

NOVENA TO ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

OCTOBER 1-9

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THE Cardinal Newman SOCIETY

Promoting and Defending Faithful Catholic Education

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day One | October 1



Intentions

For educators, that God bless all who are faithfully engaged in the great work of leading others to Truth, especially in Catholic education, catechesis, and educational apostolates; and that He bless all laypeople, clergy, and religious who, according to the example of St. John Henry Newman, are devoted to education and formation in accord with the Church's mission of evangelization and salvation.

Reading

"May I engage in them, remembering that I am a minister of Christ, and have a commission to preach the Gospel, remembering the worth of souls, and that I shall have to answer for the opportunities given me of benefiting those who are under my care."

(St. John Henry Newman, prayer for students)

"It is indeed a satisfaction to me to believe that in my time, with whatever shortcomings, I have done something for the great work of education... I have ever joined together faith and knowledge, and considered engagements in educational work a special pastoral office. ...I never would allow that, in teaching the classics, I was absolved from carrying on, by means of them, in the minds of my pupils an ethical training. I considered a College tutor to have the care of souls... To this principle I have been faithful throughout my life."

(St. John Henry Newman, at Girls' Training College, Liverpool, 1879)

Prayer

Almighty God and Father, we give You thanks for blessing the Church with the witness of Saint John Henry Newman, through whom shines Your fatherly care, the Truth of Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of conversion.

In him You have given us an example of trust in Your divine Providence and the intercession of the Virgin Mary. In him You have raised up a holy example of fidelity to the timeless teachings of Holy Mother Church.

With a special love for Catholic education, and due warning against the errors of relativism, Your servant John Henry Newman is a shining example for our times.

Grant us we beseech You, through his intercession, and according to Your holy will, the renewal of faithful Catholic education and fidelity to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be...

Saint John Henry Newman, pray for us!

NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Two | October 2

Intentions

For students, that young people might be formed in mind, body, and soul to apprehend the Truth of God and His creation; that new generations of wise and virtuous Catholics might become witnesses to Truth in a world torn apart by false ideologies, selfish ambition, lust, and strife; that Catholic educators and their graduates might answer the call of Jesus Christ to guide others to the Truth with patience, generosity, and reason.

Reading

"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 lie the main inconsistences and absurdities of the Protestant theory."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Duties of Catholics Towards the Protestant View," *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*)

"Blessed are they who give the flower of their days, and their strength of soul and body to Him; blessed are they who in their youth turn to Him who gave His life for them, and would fain give it to them and implant it in them, that they may live for ever."

(St. John Henry Newman, "The State of Innocence," *Parochial and Plain Sermons*)



St. John Henry Newman's standing desk at his oratory in Birmingham, England

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Three | October 3

Intentions

For parents, that God give them the grace, as primary educators and witnesses to the sanctity of marriage and family, to form their children in Truth and virtue; that parents might find suitable options for faithful Catholic education; and that parents of confused or wayward children might persevere in hope and prayer, comforted in the Mercy of God and His love for His lost sheep.

Reading

"...childhood is a type of the perfect Christian state; our Savior so made it when He said that we must become as little children to enter His kingdom."

(St. John Henry Newman, "The State of Innocence," *Parochial and Plain Sermons*)

"Look down then upon us from Heaven, O blessed Monica, for we are engaged in supplying that very want which called for thy prayers, and gained for thee thy crown. Thou who didst obtain thy son's conversion by the merit of thy intercession, continue that intercession for us, that we may be blest, as human instruments, in the use of those human means by which ordinarily the Holy Cross is raised aloft, and religion commands the world. Gain for us, first, that we may intensely feel that God's grace is all in all, and that we are nothing; next, that, for His greater glory, and for the honour of Holy Church, and for the good of man, we may be 'zealous for all the better gifts,' and may excel in intellect as we excel in virtue."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training," *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions*)



Photo of St. John Henry Newman at his oratory in Birmingham, England

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Four | October 4

Intentions

For an increase of faith and reason, that all people might grow in awareness of the unity of all knowledge in God the Creator; that educators might confidently integrate the certain truth of divine revelation as taught by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church with the study of every discipline; and that young people might be formed in what St. John Henry Newman called a "philosophical habit of mind," ascending above knowledge of Creation to its Creator.

Reading

"Admit a God, and you introduce among the subjects of your knowledge, a fact encompassing, closing in upon, absorbing, every other fact conceivable. How can we investigate any part of any order of Knowledge, and stop short of that which enters into every order? All true principles run over with it, all phenomena converge to it; it is truly the First and the Last. ...You will soon break up into fragments the whole circle of secular knowledge, if you begin the mutilation with divine."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Theology a Branch of Knowledge," *The Idea of a University*)

"When I speak of Knowledge, I mean something intellectual, something which grasps what it perceives through the senses; something which takes a view of things; which sees more than the senses convey; which reasons upon what it sees, and while it sees; which invests it with an idea. ...it is an acquired illumination, it is a habit, a personal possession, and an inward endowment."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Knowledge Its Own End," *The Idea of a University*)



St. John Henry Newman's private chapel at his oratory in Birmingham, England

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Five | October 5

Intentions

For protection from sin and scandal, that young people might be formed in purity of mind, body, and soul and receive the graces of the Sacraments to live in holiness; that parents, educators, clergy, religious, and all who engage with youth might witness to the Truth by their holiness of character and behavior; that Catholic education might be preserved from the influence of sinful behavior, scandal, and dissent from the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church.

Reading

"Moral character in itself, whether good or bad, as exhibited in thought and conduct, surely cannot be duly represented in words... the silent conduct of a conscientious man secures for him from beholders a feeling different in kind from any which is created by the mere versatile and garrulous Reason."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth," *Oxford University Sermons*)

"It is one great advantage of an age in which unbelief speaks out, that Faith can speak out too; that, if falsehood assails Truth, Truth can assail falsehood. In such an age it is possible to found a University more emphatically Catholic than could be set up in the middle age, because Truth can entrench itself carefully, and define its own profession severely, and display its colours unequivocally, by occasion of that very unbelief which so shamelessly vaunts itself."

(St. John Henry Newman, "A Form of Infidelity of the Day," *The Idea of a University*)



St. John Henry Newman's oratory library in Birmingham, England

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Six | October 6

Intentions

For protection from error and ideology, that the Church might be united in the one Truth of the Creator, confident that science and divine revelation flow from the same Source of knowledge; that all Catholics might resist the errors of relativism and take up Christ's call to evangelize the world; that Catholic educators might reject false ideologies and teach the truth of human nature, human dignity, the sanctity of human life, marriage, the common good, and salvation in Christ.

Reading

"...to one great mischief I have from the first opposed myself. For thirty, forty, fifty years I have resisted, to the best of my powers, the spirit of Liberalism in religion. Never did the Holy Church need champions against it more sorely than now, when, alas! it is an error overspreading as a snare the whole earth... Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching which is gaining substance and force daily. It is inconsistent with the recognition of any religion as true. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, as all are matters of opinion. ...Instead of the Church's authority and teaching they would substitute, first of all, a universal and a thoroughly secular education, calculated to bring home to every individual that to be orderly, industrious, and sober is his personal interest."

(St. John Henry Newman, upon being elevated to Cardinal, 1879)



Gravestone in Birmingham, England, inscribed on the back, *"Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem"*

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Seven | October 7

Intentions

For protection from threats to Catholic education, that God protect the natural rights and freedom of parents to form young people in both faith and reason and to determine the best means of education for their children; that Catholic educators might stand firm against false ideology and those who oppose Catholic beliefs, morals, and religious practices; that Catholic educators might have the insight and courage to expose the errors of modernity and resist the grave dangers of secularism.

Reading

"Not every age is the age of Saints, but no age is not the age of Martyrs. ...There is only one way of success over us, possible even in idea,—a wholesale massacre. Let them exterminate us, as they have done before, kill the priests, decimate the laity; and they have for a while defeated the Pope. They have no other way; they may gain a material victory, never a moral one. ...Good is never done except at the expense of those who do it: truth is never enforced except at the sacrifice of its propounders. ...I may cheerfully resign myself to such trouble or anxiety as necessarily befalls anyone who has spoken boldly on an unpopular subject in a difficult time, with the confidence that no trouble or anxiety but will bring some real good with it in the event, to those who have acted in sincerity, and by no unworthy methods, and with no selfish aim."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Duties of Catholics Towards the Protestant View," *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England*)



Chapel with Newman relic at his oratory in Birmingham, England

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Eight | October 8

Intentions

For a renewal of Catholic education worldwide, that all Catholic education might be faithful to the teaching and authority of the Catholic Church; that Catholic education might be made available and affordable to all, so every child has access to intellectual and spiritual formation in Truth and virtue; and that God bless the growing number of faithful Catholic schools, homeschools, colleges, and graduate programs and lead more families to them.

Reading

"...it is no sufficient security for the Catholicity of a University, even that the whole of Catholic theology should be professed in it, unless the Church breathes her own pure and unearthly spirit into it, and fashions and moulds its organization, and watches over its teaching, and knits together its pupils, and superintends its action. ...Satisfy yourself with what is only visibly or intelligibly excellent, as you are likely to do, and you will make present utility and natural beauty the practical test of truth, and the sufficient object of the intellect. It is not that you will at once reject Catholicism, but you will measure and proportion it by an earthly standard. You will throw its highest and most momentous disclosures into the background, you will deny its principles, explain away its doctrines, re-arrange its precepts, and make light of its practices, even while you profess it."

(St. John Henry Newman, "Duties of the Church Towards Knowledge," The Idea of a University)



Beatification by Pope Benedict XVI in Birmingham, England, on September 19, 2010

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NEWMAN NOVENA

Day Nine | October 9

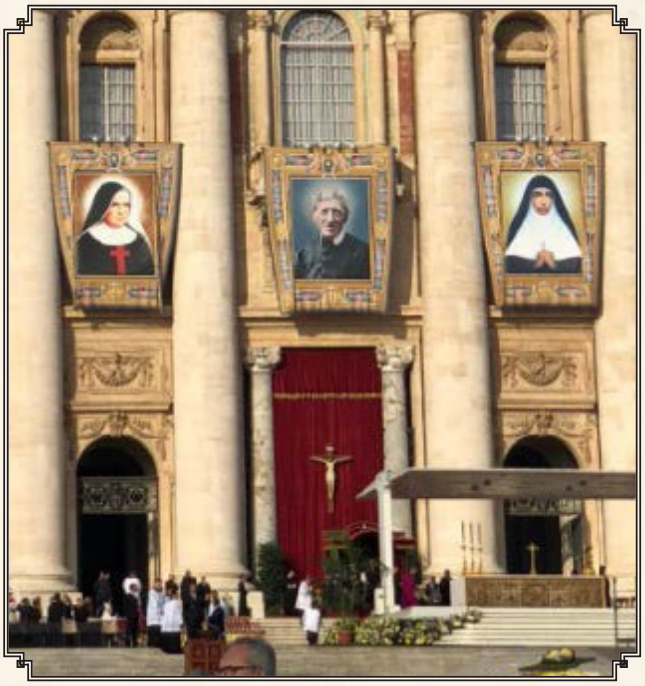
Intentions

For an increase in devotion to St. John Henry Newman, that he might be an example of faithful witness and teaching to all those engaged in Catholic education; that his feast day might be celebrated by educators, students, and parents worldwide; that as a Doctor of the Church, he will lead even more souls to conversion of both mind and heart.

Reading

"His insights into the relationship between faith and reason, into the vital place of revealed religion in civilized 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. 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. ...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."

(Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at the Beatification Mass of Cardinal John Henry Newman, 2010)



Canonization Mass at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on October 13, 2019

Prayer

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The influence of St. John Henry Newman, patron of The Cardinal Newman Society, extends across the Church and the world, but he is especially revered in the United States.

Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was an English scholar, convert, theologian, and oratory priest—and through it all, he was a devoted Catholic educator. Cor ad cor loquitur ("Heart speaks to heart") was his episcopal motto, and he believed Catholic education should lead students closer to God by the personal witness of faithful educators and cultivation of a "philosophical habit of mind." He founded and led the Oratory School in Birmingham, England, and his Idea of a University and University Sketches helped define Catholic higher education.

Members of The Cardinal Newman Society were honored to lead the official American delegation to Newman's beatification in England in 2010, to attend his canonization in Rome in 2019, and attend the special Mass in November 2025 where Pope Leo XIV declared St. John Henry Newman the 38th Doctor of the Church and Patron of Catholic education.

He is truly a most important Saint for modern times: his fight against relativism and compromised Catholicism, his lifelong endurance of government persecution of Catholics, and especially his vision for faithful Catholic education which today is championed by The Cardinal Newman Society.

A renewal of Catholic education according to the insights of St. John Henry Newman can be the solid foundation of a successful New Evangelization!

To learn more about The Cardinal Newman Society's work to promote and defend faithful Catholic education according to the vision of our holy patron, go to cardinalnewmansociety.org.

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