

Crash course on Newman

For a quick “course” on St. John Henry Newman and his thought on Catholic education, try the following. Note that the focus here is Catholic education; an exploration of Newman’s theological and philosophical work, sermons, etc. would be much more extensive.

- Read the introduction and foreword to the edition of *Idea of a University* listed below.
- Patrick Reilly, *Into the Light: Newman’s Idea for a Renewal of Education*, at <https://instituteofcatholicculture.org/events/into-the-light>
Hour-long webinar which covers the main themes in *Idea of a University* plus Newman’s thought on K-12 education.
- Patrick Reilly, “To Restore Integrity: Newman’s Idea of Education” (Sept. 19, 2019) at <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2019/09/19/to-restore-integrity-newmans-idea-of-education/>
- Fr. Ian Ker, “Newman on Education” (Dec. 1, 2008) at <https://cardinalnewmansociety.org/newman-on-education/> and “Newman on Christian Education” (May 28, 2020) at <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2020/05/28/newman-on-christian-educationfr-ian-ker/>. Father Ker was the foremost biographer of Newman. A portion of the first piece is his lecture at a CNS conference in 2001.
- Michael Pakaluk, “Newman’s Three Ideas of a University” (Oct. 19, 2019) at <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2019/10/29/newmans-three-ideas-of-a-university/>
- Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J., “Newman’s Idea of a University: Still Relevant to Catholic Higher Education” (Nov. 12, 2001) at <https://cardinalnewmansociety.org/newmans-idea-university-still-relevant-catholic-higher-education/>. Lecture to CNS conference in 2001.

Writings by St. John Henry Newman

St. John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (Cluny Media)

Purchase at <https://clunymedia.com/products/the-idea-of-a-university>

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/idea/index.html>

This is a compilation of Newman's lectures and some additional essays upon founding a Catholic university in Dublin. It is very important not to concentrate on any one portion, as if it captures Newman's thought on Catholic university education. Each lecture/essay is a single part of a complete argument for Catholic education, and it can even seem at times that he advocates a secular education, which is opposite of his intention and misses the whole point of the book.

Also be cautious of other editions of this book. Some editors have discarded portions, especially those completing the argument for faithful Catholic education. Some editions are edited poorly. The online free edition (linked above) is good, and the Cluny edition for purchase (linked above) includes an excellent introduction by Don Briel and foreword by Christopher Blum.

St. John Henry Newman, *Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training* (Feast of St. Monica, 1856)

Online at <https://www.newmanreader.org/works/occasions/sermon1.html>

Includes some of Newman's most important writing on education: The student "has all these separate powers warring in his own breast,—appetite, passion, secular ambition, intellect, and conscience, and trying severally to get possession of him... Here, then, I conceive, is the object of the Holy See and the Catholic Church in setting up Universities; it is to reunite things which were in the beginning joined together by God, and have been put asunder by man. ...It will not satisfy me, what satisfies so many, to have two independent systems, intellectual and religious, going at once side by side..."

St. John Henry Newman, "Duties of Catholics Towards the Protestant View," *Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England* (Longman, Green & Co., 1908)

Online at <https://www.newmanreader.org/works/england/lecture9.html>

"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 am not denying you are such already: but I mean to be severe, and, as some would say, exorbitant in my demands, 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 inconsistencies and absurdities of the Protestant theory.”

St. John Henry Newman, “Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth” (Jan. 22, 1832), in *Oxford University Sermons* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909), 75-98.

Online at <https://www.newmanreader.org/works/oxford/sermon5.html>

Argues for personal witness as the best teacher.

St. John Henry Newman, *Rise and Progress of Universities and Benedictine Essays* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2001)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/Progress-Universities-Benedictine-Essays-Cardinal/dp/0268040052/>

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/historical/volume3/universities/index.html> and <https://newmanreader.org/works/historical/volume2/benedictine/mission.html> and <https://newmanreader.org/works/historical/volume2/benedictine/schools.html>

Newman’s essays on Benedictine education, plus his history of Catholic universities was published a few years after *Idea of a University*.

St. John Henry Newman, *My Campaign in Ireland Volumes I & II* (Gracewing, 2021 and 2022)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/My-Campaign-Ireland-Newman-Millennium/dp/0852444095/> and <https://www.amazon.com/Campaign-Connection-Catholic-University-Millennium/dp/0852449666/>

Edited by Newman historian Paul Shrimpton, these are the first published volumes of Newman’s collected papers related to his founding of a Catholic university in Dublin. They provide much insight into Newman’s thought on university education.

St. John Henry Newman, *Loss and Gain* (Ignatius Press, 2012)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/Loss-Gain-Ignatius-Critical-Editions/dp/1586177052/>

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/gain/index.html>

This is one of Newman’s two novels, describing the conversations and conversion of a student at Anglican Oxford university. Semi-autobiographical.

St. John Henry Newman, *Biglietto Speech* (May 17, 1879)

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/sayings/file1.html#biglietto>

Speech given following Newman’s designation as Cardinal. “...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, From a letter about education (Aug. 15, 1879)

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/sayings/file1.html#education>

Newman describes his work in education as "pastoral": "I have ever joined together faith and knowledge."

St. John Henry Newman, *Pillar of the Cloud (or Lead, Kindly Light)* (June 16, 1833)

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/verses/verse90.html>

St. John Henry Newman, *Substance and Shadow* (Dec. 7, 1832)

Online at <https://newmanreader.org/works/verses/verse32.html>

Readings About St. John Henry Newman

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at Beatification Mass of John Henry Newman (Sept. 19, 2010)

Online at https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100919_beatif-newman.html

"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. The project to found a Catholic University in Ireland provided him with an opportunity to develop his ideas on the subject, and the collection of discourses that he published as *The Idea of a University* holds up an ideal from which all those engaged in academic formation can continue to learn. And indeed, what better goal could teachers of religion set

themselves than Blessed John Henry's famous appeal for an intelligent, well-instructed laity: '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' (The Present Position of Catholics in England, ix, 390). On this day when the author of those words is raised to the altars, 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."

"The Death of Cardinal Newman," *The Guardian* (Aug. 12, 1890)

Online at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/12/the-death-of-cardinal-newman-archive-1890>

Obituary of St. John Henry Newman. Today there are many scholars who are trying to distort Newman's thought, including his fidelity to Catholic teaching (because of his writings on the importance of conscience) and support for the papacy. This obituary, published the day after his death, shows what faithful Catholic contemporaries thought of him.

Paul Shrimpton, *The 'Making of Men'. The Idea and Reality of Newman's University in Oxford and Dublin* (Gracewing, 2014)

<https://www.amazon.com/Making-Reality-Newmans-university-Oxford/dp/1781820309/>

This is a highly detailed, historical look at Newman's founding of his Catholic university in Dublin. It is more factual than philosophical, but it offers many insights into how Newman organized and operated his university, trying to reach the ideal of his *Idea of a University*. And if you lament the failings of bishops today, consider what Newman suffered.

Paul Shrimpton, *A Catholic Eton? Newman's Oratory School* (Gracewing, 2005)

<https://www.amazon.com/Catholic-Eton-Paul-Shrimpton/dp/0852446616/>

This is a highly detailed, historical look at Newman's decades of work in K-12 education as founder and head of the Oratory School in Birmingham, England. It's one of the few close examinations of Newman's K-12 experience and thought. It also provides a fascinating look at the Catholic culture in England in the late 19th century.

Fr. Juan Velez, *Holiness in a Secular Age: The Witness of Cardinal Newman* (Scepter, 2017)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/Holiness-Secular-Age-Witness-Cardinal/dp/1594172811/>

Father Juan Velez is an Opus Dei priest who has done very good work on Newman. This is an excellent introduction to Newman, with emphasis on his thought, including education and other philosophical and theological topics.

Fr. Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2019)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/John-Henry-Newman-Ian-Ker/dp/0198856806/>

Father Ker's lengthy biography is regarded the definitive study of Newman's life.

Fr. Juan Velez, *Passion for Truth, the Life of John Henry Newman* (Scepter, 2011)

Purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/Passion-Truth-Life-Henry-Newman/dp/0895558718>

This is an excellent biography of Newman, much shorter than Ker's.

Patrick Reilly, "Newman and the Renewal of Catholic Identity in Higher Education," lecture at Portsmouth Institute conference on Newman (June 12, 2010)

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEvyFqCSzZo>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JMtX3tvkag>

Part 3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf_9lj7LUZk

Part 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hifb4YmbIEs>

Part 5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmriPAtIA30>

Q&A: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEbEx7h-Rc>

Q&A: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScudayGqmwI>

Q&A: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nfSF6HH1gE>