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1801-1890

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Report from Kosovo

J. Robert Wright



IT ALL BEGAN back in July last summer when an article in the *New York Times* described the peacekeeping situation mandated in Kosovo by resolution of the UN Security Council in June of 1999 as basically “legal,” but had very little to say about its religious, cultural, and historical consequences. Albeit factually accurate, the implication of this press account, at least to me, seemed to be that the aftermath of such feelings among the human beings affected thereby mattered very little; but I knew that this was certainly not true in the case of the many Christians at the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of Saint Sava (near to my New York home at The General Theological Seminary), which has had a long history of friendship with the Episcopal Church. Even though peace of a sort had been restored in Kosovo, I knew that these people had been deeply aggrieved by the hostilities of the last few decades over there, no matter who was to blame. Although one can rejoice that the fighting has subsided, there is still need to sort out the feelings so that true reconciliation can begin.

This was what I thought as I penned my Letter to the Editor of the *New York Times*, knowing full well there was little probability that they would publish it. I shared my letter with the Dean of St Sava Cathedral here, who immediately translated it into Serbian from which it was rapidly published in the national Serbian-American newspaper. But would the *Times* take it? To my surprise (given the legendary

reluctance of the *Times* to carry anything much about religious conflict) they did decide to publish it, not in its printed “New York” edition, but in its international web edition — and the very next day there it was. But what amazed me even more, was the fact that also the next day I received an email from Dr Christopher Hall, President of the American University in Kosovo, who, having read my letter on the web, expressed appreciation for it and asked if I would like to come over at their expense to give some lectures and see things there for myself. It turned out that Dr Hall is an Episcopalian, a doctor in history from Oxford University like myself, and a fellow member of the Episcopal Church Historical Society who was aware (by the web) of my work and writing as Historiographer of the Episcopal Church and as senior consultant to its ecumenical office.

So I went, and arrived there in time for a brief rest in preparation for celebrating the Eucharist in the president’s office on Sunday. He explained that he had previously requested the Church of England to send an Anglican priest to celebrate there, but to no avail. I decided to preach on ecumenism and the importance of accessibility to Eucharistic worship for all Christians. I was greatly assisted in technological preparations for the liturgy and my lectures by David Sibley and Brandt Montgomery, seminarians here at GTS.

The American University in Kosovo (AUK), located in Prishtina its capital city and founded about eight years ago as the recent fighting began to subside and come under control, has about 500 students, all commuters, its instruction being in English and its students mainly Albanian Kosovar Muslims but also drawn from the daughters and sons of diplomats as well as a few remaining Serbian Orthodox and a good sprinkling of Albanian Catholics and many others of no religious affiliation. Its degrees and faculty (largely American) are accredited from the Rochester Institute of Technology. Although non-profit, its fees are about one quarter the level of those for students attending in Rochester. Its academic level is regarded as the best in

Kosovo and superior to the older and much larger but inferior state-related university there, of which 99% of the students are Albanian, in which language all instruction is given. (There is also said to be a much smaller Serbian-language university at Mitrovica in the north, which I did not visit). The AUK specializes in the offering of English language and technological studies that are now so necessary for the economic rehabilitation of that war-stricken land, although it seems to be the policy of its forward-looking president to invite a few short-term external lecturers in other fields. I think this is how I came to be invited, and the subjects I lectured on, at his request, were on the earliest foundations of the history of the Anglican tradition of Christianity (Bede and the Celts, etc.), as well as giving a power-point presentation on the earliest visual traces of Christian faith in Britain. (President Hall selected these topics, among many that I offered, rather than a more contemporary lecture on ecumenism in America today or anything in patristics). Attendance at each was about sixty. Every student there is expected to have a computer, and most writing assignments are made for groups of three or four. One hopeful sign of the beginnings of reconciliation there is that a petition has recently come from several students for a course on the Serbian language, even though so many Serbian students have been driven out of the country, on the grounds that Serbian studies represent a vital part of the historical back-ground there, as well as being the language spoken by much of the world that the AUK students are entering as adults.

It is estimated that the population of Kosovo now is just under two million, of which some 88% is Albanian with Serbians counting the second largest group of only some 7%. The two official languages are Albanian and Serbian, with the latter using both Cyrillic and Latin alphabets. Gheg is the variety of Albanian spoken in Kosovo and northern Albania, whereas Tosk is the tongue spoken in southern Albania. About 90% of the population now remaining in Kosovo is estimated to be Muslim, some 7%

Serbian Orthodox, and 3% Albanian Catholic. Everything seems peaceful, at least for the present. The AUK is a gated community, as are many institutions in that country, but I saw no signs of fighting anywhere. The nearest I came to danger could have been a minor earthquake (they, as well as power cuts, are somewhat frequent in this part of the world), when I was awakened about 2:30 a.m. on my third morning there by a violent shaking of the door and windows of the small apartment for visiting faculty where I was lodged. I thought I had overslept and was being roused to the breakfast meeting I was to have

that morning with some of the students, but I later learned that it was only a "minor earth tremor," and no damage was done. Among all age groups, the favorite drinks seemed to be "macchiato" (espresso coffee with foamed milk), "raki" (Turkish clear anise liquor, diluted with water and ice), and "slivovica" (Serbian plum brandy).

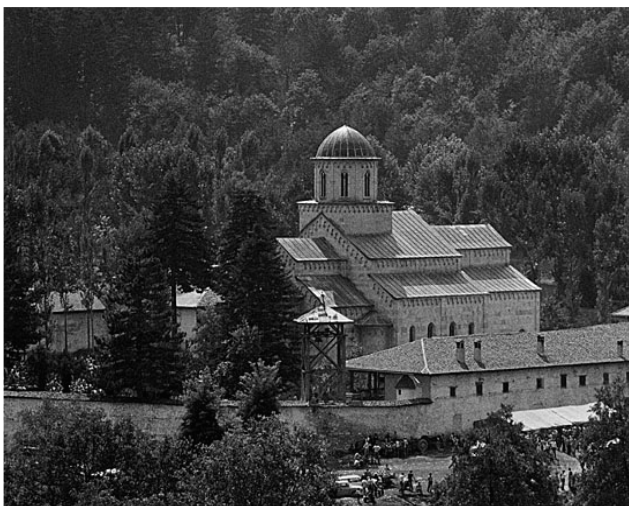
Business is usually done face-to-face over these liquids, rather than by email or telephone. Smoking is frequent and heavy.

President Hall had very graciously arranged for trips for me to the three ancient monasteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church within Kosovo, and I was taken by an AUK car and driver, together with a translator, in half-day visits to each of these historic sites, namely Grachanitsa, Dechani, and Pech, for which I had expressed concern in my letter to the editor of the NY Times. Were they being left to ruin, were they unprotected, or would they soon be destroyed? Each of these is still a living monastic community dating basically from the fourteenth century, albeit now smaller in numbers (say 5-15), still replete with splendid and historic frescoes and icons in various states of preservation, and each a place where God is worshipped. Each is under military protection by peacekeeping troops from other nations, such as Britain, Italy, Sweden. Germany, Spain, France, mandated by the UN Security Council resolution of June 1999 and now protected by laws under something called the "Ahtisaari Plan," and I was warmly welcomed by the local authorities in



The American University in Kosovo
Photo courtesy aukonline.org

each. Grachanitsa is the current residence of the one Serbian Orthodox Bishop in Kosovo, Theodosije by name, who was a very gracious monk and happened to have been a seminary classmate in Belgrade of the current Dean of the Serbian Cathedral in New York. I also met two younger monks who were quite interested to learn that “The Meaning of Icons” is one of the classes I teach at the General Seminary. At Dechani I met the famous Father Sava, webmaster of their superb website that has made their monastery and its icons, manuscripts, and treasures as well as the entire Serbian Orthodox Church well known the world over. I was pleased to learn that he had even read and studied the Venerable Bede. Pech, on the other hand, founded by Saint Sava himself, and a patriarchate independent from Constantinople since 1346, has been for centuries the place where the Serbian patriarchs are enthroned, the latest being only earlier this summer. Another excursion, which provided a further comparison, was a visit to the Grand Mufti of all Kosovo, Naim Ternava, where I was also received quite graciously and where we discussed the controversy about building a mosque in New York near ground zero. (His reception parlor was located on the second floor, apparently for reasons of safety). Both Archbishop Theodosije and also the Grand Mufti each gave me large photographic booklets in color purporting to show how extensive and devastating was the damage to so many of their own churches and mosques in the hostilities of the last several years. My own puzzlement was that each side was publishing in print the evidence to show how widely their own side had suffered at the hands of the other!



Dechani Monastery, Kosovo



Patriarchal Catholicon at Pech Monastery, Kosovo

The name Kosovo itself is derived from the Serbian word “kos” which means blackbird. One important visit I made was to the so-called “Field of Blackbirds,” where the Serbs were defeated by the Ottoman Turks at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, widely seen as the end of the medieval Serbian empire. This was also where some six centuries later the now-deceased Serbian nationalist leader Slobodan Milosevich made his famous speech in 1987 that resulted in the renewal of much ethnic violence in this part of the world and ultimately resulted in the loss of Kosovo to the Serbs and caused thousands of them to be killed or transplanted. It was his policy of ethnic cleansing and violently repressing of the majority ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo, according to the New York Times, that finally convinced the United States and a majority of European nations that Serbia, in supporting his policies, had forfeited any right to govern there. Still another audience that I had was with one Serbian voice in the Kosovo government, Serjan Sentich, whose function is to facilitate the re-settlement of the multitudes of these refugees now that the recent wars seem to be over, for their repatriation is essential if a balanced and peaceful state of co-existence is to be created for the Kosovo of the future. I was also shown a gigantic Serbian Orthodox Church in Prishtina under construction, begun by Milosevich with Serbian government money, which will now probably never be finished because his side lost. And another visit was made to the chancellor (bishop’s representative) of the Albanian Catholic diocese, located in Prizren, which is in process of building its own huge new cathedral, as the Roman Church seems to always be doing everywhere, as well as seeking to recover

thousands of “crypto-catholic” families who had converted to Islam many years ago in order to avoid the required payments of poll tax earlier placed upon all citizens who were not of the Islamic faith. In all of these receptions, I wore clericals, I was presented as a visiting guest of honor, and in anticipation I had taken with me as gifts several copies of my recent book on the Venerable Bede and our own Anglican historical tradition, as well as GTS lapel pins, thus to fly the home colors. All this about Anglicanism seemed rather new to most of the people I met, since it seemed that they had heard very little of us Anglicans, even from the European diocese of the Church of England. But I should add that there was also one other visitor there greater than I, with whom my path kept crossing, and that was Hillary Rodham Clinton, who was at the same time making an official visit as Secretary of State, and her visit served as a reminder of the very high esteem in which the USA is held in Kosovo, the main avenue in Prishtina being named Bill Clinton Boulevard (it was previously called Lenin Street) and displaying his statue twice the size of life (also a large replica of the Statue of Liberty), as well as streets named for Madeleine Albright and Tony Blair. All told, these experiences made me proud to be an American, pleased to have many good Serbian friends, as well as glad to be an Episcopalian, and especially proud that the enlightened president of the AUK is a member of our own church.

Kosovo has been through much political turmoil for many years, and the current settlement of peace is still quite fragile. A possibly hopeful sign for ecumenical relations with the Roman Church has been the invitation by the new Serbian patriarch to the Pope to visit the town of Nish (in Serbia, not Kosovo) in 2013, where the emperor Constantine was born and where the patriarch was recently bishop, for the public celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the religious peace established by that emperor in the Edict of Milan, but there are already serious objections being raised from various quarters. And only on November 2, shortly after I returned to the USA, the Kosovo Parliament voted no-confidence and brought down its government, with the result that new elections must now be held by the middle of January. At present, it seems that the independence of Kosovo is recognized by some, such as the United States, but not by all, and its Serbian Orthodox religious and cultural heritage is protected, but how long this current peace will last is

uncertain. Did Kosovo really have the right to declare its own independence from Serbia in 2008, as the Serbian Foreign Minister has queried and was quoted in the NY Times? The lesson of Kosovo, he intimated, is now the temptation for separatist movements elsewhere to write their own declarations of independence once a shift in the majority of the population has been forcefully created, then allow a war to ensue among the aggrieved parties, and hope that the result will be at least partially for their own benefit once a peace is imposed by a well-meaning international commission. And yet the question remains, as to whether Serbia had relinquished any further moral right at all to rule in Kosovo, given the violent repression of non-Serbs under the Milosevich regime. As Americans we always lean in the direction of majority rule, but can that principle be upheld when the previous majority has been forcibly exterminated?

Decisions have had to be made, and life has to go on. The people of Kosovo still need our prayers, and on this note I conclude these observations with our Lord’s warning from Mark’s Gospel (3:23-26): Jesus called the disciples to him and said “How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.”



Dr Christopher Hall, member of the Episcopal Church Historical Society and president of the American University in Kosovo, briefs Anglican Society president J. Robert Wright in preparation for conversations with various religious leaders in Kosovo.

Newman and the Power of Personal Holiness

Cody C. Unterseher



ON SEPTEMBER 19 of this year, in an open-air eucharistic celebration in Cofton Park, Birmingham, UK, Pope Benedict XVI beatified John Henry Cardinal Newman. This was the penultimate step towards Newman's full recognition as a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. During the General Convention of 2009, Newman's name was added to the list of saints and worthies of The Episcopal Church as part of the Convention's sweeping, if also *ad experimentum*, reform of the sanctoral calendar under the title *Holy Women, Holy Men*. Newman has been commemorated in the Church of England since at least 1997, with the publication of that church's volume of commemorations, *Exciting Holiness* — and long before that in some Anglican communities.

Certainly, Newman's place in the history of Christianity is unique, and his contributions to theology are formidable. Still, it's not every day that an ex-Anglican priest, received into the Roman Catholic Church at mid-career, eventually elevated to the rank of Cardinal-Deacon, gets recognized for his witness to Christ and personal holiness of life *by the very Anglicans he left* before being recognized for the same by the Catholic Church! In acknowledgment of these momentous events, we are pleased to feature three articles on Newman's theological contributions in this issue of *The Anglican*. The first, by the Rev'd Christopher L. Webber, examines the sermons and preaching of John Henry Newman. The second article, by the late Rev'd Reginald H. Fuller, is an "Archival

Anglican" piece that first appeared in these pages 20 years ago to-the-issue. It examines the Mariology of Newman from his years as an Anglican priest. The third contribution, by Roman Catholic lay scholar Troy A. Stefano, compliments Father Fuller's examination, extending the scope of the investigation of Newman's Mariology through his ministry in the Catholic Church.

On September 17, two days before Newman's beatification, Pope Benedict XVI visited Lambeth Palace to exchange fraternal greetings with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams. They met in the context of a gathering of bishops from both churches, during which Archbishop Williams made a rather powerful statement regarding the power of personal holiness to transcend divisions:

we shall be effective defenders or proclaimers of our faith when we can show what a holy life looks like, a life in which the joy of God is transparently present. And this means that our ministry together as bishops across the still-surviving boundaries of our confessions is not only a search for how we best act together in the public arena; it is a quest together for holiness and transparency to God, a search for ways in which we may help each other to grow in the life of the Holy Spirit. [...]

In 1845, when John Henry Newman finally decided that he must follow his conscience and seek his future in serving God in communion with the See of Rome, one of his most intimate Anglican friends and allies, the priest Edward Bouverie Pusey, whose memory the Church of England marked in its liturgical calendar yesterday [September 16], wrote a moving meditation on this "parting of friends" in which he said of the separation between Anglicans and Roman Catholics: "it is what is unholy on both sides that keeps us apart".

That should not surprise us: holiness is at its simplest fellowship with Christ; and when

that fellowship with Christ is brought to maturity, so is our fellowship with one another. As bishops, we are servants of the unity of Christ's people, Christ's one Body. And, meeting as we do as bishops of separated church communities, we must all feel that each of our own ministries is made less by the fact of our dividedness, a very real but imperfect communion. Perhaps we shall not quickly overcome the remaining obstacles to full, restored communion; but no obstacles stand in the way of our seeking, as a matter of joyful obedience to the Lord, more ways in which to build up one another in holiness by prayer and public celebration together, by closer friendship, and by growing together both in the challenging work of service for all whom Christ loves, and mission to all God has made.¹

It is difficult for Anglicans to ignore John Henry Newman, though undoubtedly some have tried. It would be tempting to castigate him for his departure from the Church of England and submission to the Roman obedience; and yet we find ourselves adding him to our liturgical calendars with greater haste than the Roman Church! Newman was a man who “wrestled with God” and with how God has chosen to be known in the world — through the church. We may not be fond of the end results of Newman's journey, but there is something eminently respectable in the way that he undertook it: severely, gravely, seeking all the while to know the will of God and to conform his conscience to it. Newman is the great champion of the primacy of conscience in the modern era, which primacy ranks high among Anglican ideals. His devotion to his Lord and to his Lord's Mother, while tender, is unsentimental — a sharp contrast to much of the Victorian devotional spirit among Anglicans and Roman Catholics alike. Whether or not we like where it led in the end, we have to acknowledge that the integrity of Newman's walk with God in faith is unassailable.

I suspect that's why we Episcopalians and Anglicans have been able to accept Newman's witness so freely, without getting caught up in the morass of denominational scorekeeping. Anglicans didn't “lose” Newman, nor did Rome “gain” him. If anything, the attention that the story of Newman's reception into the Roman Catholic Church received in his day — and the

attention that his beatification is bringing to it now — simply opens the riches of his life, his thought and his witness to an ever-widening audience.

Watching the broadcast of the various events of this September past, I heard a number of Roman Catholic commentators make smug remarks about Newman as being a “bridge” into the Roman Catholic Church for both thinking and disaffected Anglicans. What they seemed to forget (perhaps for the good!) is that bridges are naturally neutral: unless the flow of traffic is artificially controlled, persons may pass from either side to the other. Newman's early work as a Tractarian, exposing the inherently Catholic nature of Anglicanism in its doctrine and discipline, and his championing of the primacy of conscience especially after his reception into the Church of Rome, has made it possible for as many disaffected and thinking Roman Catholics to find a home in the Anglican tradition as vice-versa.

But Newman need not divide: indeed, we best ought to let him unite. In an open letter published in the *English Churchman* on October 16, 1845, Edward Bouverie Pusey wrote of Newman's reception into the Catholic Church, “It is perhaps the greatest event which has happened since the Communion of the Churches has been interrupted, that such an one, so formed in our [Anglican] Church, and the work of God's Spirit as dwelling within her, should be transplanted into theirs. If anything could open their eyes to what is good in us, or soften in us any wrong prejudices against them, it would be the presence of such an one, nurtured and grown to ripeness in our church, and now removed to theirs.”² I would like to think that Newman, and above all the power of his personal holiness, can open all our eyes to the riches of what is good in both churches, and also perhaps challenge us to work together with renewed vigor to eliminate those things that are “unholy on both sides”—the things that “keep us apart.”

NOTES

1. Rowan Williams, “Archbishop of Canterbury's Speech to Pope Benedict,” Lambeth Palace, 17 September 2010. <http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/Replay-the-Visit/Speeches/Speeches-17-September/Archbishop-of-Canterbury-s-Speech-to-Pope-Benedict>

2. As recorded in Henry Parry Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1893), 461.

Waiting Room

Victor Lee Austin



A DOCTOR WAS LEADING A SEMINAR on the Hippocratic Oath. Around the table were about twenty-five of us, some doctors, some married to doctors, but more of us from non-medical professions. Our seminar leader pointed out that for most of the history of medicine, the physicians who took that oath had very little they could do for their patients: perhaps some pain control, some received lore about herbal medicine, and of course the ability to accompany a patient in his illness and to keep confidence. How different medicine is today.

Doctors and patients alike decry the downsides of the specialization of contemporary medicine. If one of us has, say, a brain tumor, we end up in the hands of many physicians: the neurologist, the neurosurgeon, the radiologist, the oncologist, and so on. This is on top of our regular doctor and, for half our species, a gynecologist. To have all these doctors is a luxury in a sense, made possible in western societies by the immense amount of money we devote to medicine, through various combinations of insurance payments and governmental appropriations. To have all these doctors is also a blessing, because any one of them has almost godlike knowledge of his specialty, which knowledge can benefit us in ways unimaginable even as recently as the time of our childhood. Doctors today have so much knowledge that it seems they can cure, or are likely to cure, most of the things that afflict the children of men. If only

we can find the right doctor, get in to see the right specialist, then all shall be well.

But this luxury and blessing comes at a cost. For one thing, it is hard to keep the patient together, to see the good of the whole person, when he has so many specialists looking after him. For another, the patient spends a lot of time going from doctor to doctor.

You make your appointment. Being conscientious, you arrive early: it's a new doctor, you didn't want to be late, you didn't know how long it would take you to get there. You are twenty minutes early. The waiting room is nearly full. There is some talking. There is a television in the corner. You try to read the book you brought with you. About forty-five minutes pass — the doctor is running late — and then your name is called. She takes time with you, and you like that, telling her as best you can what your symptoms are. She examines you attentively, and then orders two tests for you to have done — you'll have to go to another office for the tests — and states that she'd like you to come back in six weeks.

So you've taken out altogether, with travel and waiting time, maybe three hours of your day, for the sake of those ten or fifteen minutes. You like her, and you don't begrudge her the time. But it is real time — real cost. Now you're going to do the same again: phone for an appointment, visit a different office, have some tests done. Then you'll phone her office, try to make sure the test results have been transmitted and not lost, make your appointment, and appear for your return visit.

And you will do this, not only for your present condition, but time upon time upon time for the rest of your life. Mammograms, colonoscopies, blood tests, broken bones, joints that wear down,

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lungs that fill up, blood vessels that are too tight, the

heart itself, the nervous system; not to mention the things that come at you from outside: flu, other viruses, skin disease, infections of new sorts. You are sitting in one of those waiting rooms, children on the floor, television in the corner, book on your lap, but you aren't reading your book or watching TV or listening to the talk around you. You are thinking, I'm going to be in rooms like this for as long as I live. I'm glad to be called out of this room, to see the doctor, to have the hope that my condition can be better understood and perhaps cured. But whether for the thing that brought me here today or for something else, most assuredly I will be back in this room or another like it, waiting again.

A lot of our life is waiting. There are spiritual disciplines that we might develop. A simple one is to pray for people who are in the waiting room with you.

Another is gratitude. What here can I be thankful for, while I am waiting? Sometimes I notice there is no TV and no background music in the waiting room — believe me, I give thanks for that. And all of us who have the luxury of access to doctors should be thankful. Perhaps it's too obvious to mention, but I think the waiting room is a parable for our lives as a whole. Something is not right with us. We suffer the infections of sin, and we face the certainty of our mortality. We are waiting to see the physician of our souls. It's not a perfect parable — this life has eternal significance in terms of history and decision, things we do, characters we make of ourselves. This life is not simply waiting. Nonetheless there is truth in the parable of the waiting room. Someday our name will be called. We will leave this waiting room and meet our true Physician face to face.

THE PREACHING ANGLICAN

The Preaching of John Henry Newman *Christopher L. Webber*

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN is known today first of all because of his “conversion,” his leaving of the Church of England to become a Roman Catholic mid-way through his life. That conversion, however, was actually the last in a series of at least three “conversions.”

Newman's Conversions

Newman himself speaks of his first conversion, to evangelical Christianity, at the age of fifteen and then, as is well-known, he was converted to Anglican Catholicism as a young man before being converted to Roman Catholicism in mid-life. His life might, therefore, be better analyzed in terms of three rather sharp course corrections within a more gradual process of change that ended with his entrance into the Church of Rome.

Most people naturally grow and change as their lives go on; indeed, it would be frightening to find a human being who had never changed his or her opinions and one might well ask whether such a

person had truly lived at all. It is probably because we know ourselves to be “in transit” that we read biographies and study the lives of others. We gain insight into our own lives by comparing our experience with theirs. Newman's story, then, is of particular interest because the process of conversion is so central to it, and Newman's third “conversion” gets our attention not because such changes are unusual but only because Newman had become perhaps the most prominent Christian apologist of his day, and his third course correction, therefore, took place in the full glare of national publicity.

The Rev'd Christopher L. Webber, D.D., a graduate of Princeton University and the General Theological Seminary in New York (with two earned degrees and an honorary doctorate from the latter), is a noted author of a wide-ranging books, poetry and hymnody, and a much sought-after preacher and public speaker.

Newman's Sermons

In view of the emphasis often placed on this conversion, it is interesting to notice that in Newman's obituaries he was remembered not for that but for his character and his eloquence. His Oxford sermons were described in one obituary as "probably the finest discourses that have ever been heard from an Anglican pulpit" (published in *Truth*) while another suggested that "the vigorous simplicity and splendour of his language will endure so long as the English language shall last" (published in *Vanity Fair*).¹

I would argue with that analysis. A sermon, for one thing, ought to begin with clarity and force to capture the listener's attention as John Donne did in proclaiming, "God made the first marriage, and man made the first divorce," or as Phillips Brooks did in announcing, "In this world wherever there is life there is struggle." Compare those openings with a typical Newman entrance (on John the Baptist): "The holy Baptist was sent before our Lord to prepare His way; that is, to be His instrument in rousing, warning, humbling, and inflaming the hearts of men, so that, when He came, they might believe in Him" or (on Psalm 119:99-100): "In these words the Psalmist declares, that in consequence of having obeyed God's commandments he had obtained more wisdom and understanding than those who had first enlightened his ignorance, and were once more enlightened than he." Newman was capable of eloquence but his style is often too indirect, convoluted, and passive to have much chance of holding a contemporary audience. Newman is too much the academic, too fond of such phrases as "It is to be observed . . ." That last phrase, in fact, occurs in the great majority of his sermons at least once or twice, occasionally even five or six times in the same sermon, in various forms: ("Now let us observe," "I would have you observe," "as I have already observed," "now observe what happened," "and let it be observed"). It is a teacher's phrase, cool and analytical, not one to engage the emotions.

Now that is odd because Newman insisted always that religion was a matter of the heart. Faith is not unreasonable, he taught, but neither is it to be found by rational analysis. "We obey God primarily," Newman said in one sermon, "because we actually feel His presence in our consciences bidding us obey Him."² It was a recurrent theme: the truth of faith's claim on human lives is established by an inner



Newman's Pulpit at the
Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Oxford

testimony. "Let us but obey God's voice in our hearts," Newman said, "and I will venture to say we shall have no doubts practically formidable about the truth of Scripture,"³ or, again: faith is "to feel in good earnest that we are creatures of God."⁴ In his fifteen Oxford University Sermons (not really sermons at all, but extremely long lectures) preached at Oxford over that number of years, he argued that the role of reason is to bring understanding to the faith that has first been accepted, but it is the conscience, guiding from within, that leads the individual to faith.

For all that, Newman makes no overt attempt to let his heart speak to the hearts of his hearers. There is never a personal anecdote in Newman's sermons; the word "I" is not a part of his preacher's vocabulary as it was for Donne and Brooks. Newman's best known writing is the very personal story of his conversion to Rome, *Apologia Pro Sua Vita*, but nothing of this story appears in his sermons. Nonetheless, a careful look at Newman's sermons reveals a preacher wrestling with himself and urging on others the process that he must have been aware of in himself, a process of growth and change through which God is at work to bring about a purpose.

Sometimes, in fact, Newman does this by describing a Biblical figure's thought in the first person, as when he speaks of the Psalmist analyzing

his spiritual growth, but seems to be telling his own story through the Psalmist's voice:

As if he said, "When I was a child, I was instructed in religious knowledge by kind and pious friends, who told me who my Maker was, what great things He had done for me, how much I owed to Him, and how I was to serve Him. All this I learned from them, and I rejoice that they taught it me: yet they did more; they set me in the way to gain a knowledge of religious truth in another and higher manner. They not only taught me, but trained me; they were careful that I should not only know my duty, but do it. They obliged me to obey; they obliged me to begin a religious course of life, which (praised be God!) I have ever pursued . . ."⁵

That may be an indirect way of relating Newman's own early exposure to Christianity. So the "religious course of life" is not something static but something to be "pursued." In one of his more rhetorical passages, in rhythms that sound remarkably like those of John Donne, Newman elaborated on that theme in describing Christian life as a "calling" that leads us constantly onward to new stages of growth:

For in truth we are not called once only, but many times; all through our life Christ is calling us. He called us first in Baptism; but afterwards also; whether we obey His voice or not, He graciously calls us still. If we fall from our Baptism, He calls us to repent; if we are striving to fulfil our calling, He calls us on from grace to grace, and from holiness to holiness, while life is given us. Abraham was called from his home, Peter from his nets, Matthew from his office, Elisha from his farm, Nathanael from his retreat; we are all in course of calling, on and on, from one thing to another, having no resting-place, but mounting towards our eternal rest, and obeying one command only to have another put upon us. He calls us again and again, in order to justify us again and again, — and again and again, and more and more, to sanctify and glorify us.⁶

But this is dangerous doctrine for Newman since individual change would seem to require social change and Newman had no interest in that at all. Indeed, he seems uninterested in society. Even when the argument seems to demand it, there are never references to specific contemporary events. There are, of course, various kinds of sermons, some that proclaim and some that exhort and some that inspire, but whatever the type of sermon, a preacher who wants to be helpful will be as specific as possible, using illustrations from the world his hearers live in or telling stories made up to illustrate the point. This Newman almost never does. Even when the topic of his sermon is that "Christ will come in a wicked age — with reference to these times" there is no specific reference to contemporary society. Even a sermon on "the Church and the World" in a volume of Newman's sermons entitled *Sermons on Subjects of the Day* offers only the most general guidance: pray daily — give to the poor, pay tithes, build churches — but no direct reference to the world outside the church door.⁷ Sin is always an individual matter; there are no references in Newman's sermons to specific social conditions.

Once, indeed, Newman did speak to a contemporary issue. The King and the Bishop had asked the clergy to receive an offering to build schools for free blacks and Newman took the occasion, at a time when Britain was on the verge of ending slavery,⁸ to preach a whole sermon on slavery, maintaining that, however distasteful it might be, it was "allowed under the gospel." Those opposing it, Newman said, and "talking of liberty, equality, rights, privileges, and the like" will, at the Last Judgment, "wish and lament that they did not cut off their right hand or pluck out their right eye, rather than use such false and misleading words."⁹ This is, perhaps, the most remarkable example of Newman's antipathy to social change, yet even here nothing is said about slavery as it existed at the time, or the abolition movement, or the social implications of abolition for England or its possessions. Here, as elsewhere, Newman seems deliberately to avoid the contemporary reference. Typically, he will say, "The Israelites were like this," referring to a specific Biblical incident, and then say, "We are like that also," but provide no examples to demonstrate the truth of his assertion.¹⁰

If social change was anathema, individual change could only be envisioned with difficulty. Sometimes, in fact, he argues against it as in a passage where we can almost hear him resisting the attraction of Rome to himself when he asks his congregation:

. . . are not some of us tempted to be impatient at the religious disadvantages we lie under; and instead of waiting for God's time, and God's prophet, take the matter into our own hand, leave the place where God has put us, and join some other communion, in order (as we hope) to have clearer light and fuller privileges?¹¹

If Newman was asking himself that question, he answered himself six months later by arguing that "Reverence for the old paths is a chief Christian duty."

. . . —not to slight what has gone before, not to seek after some new thing, not to attempt discoveries in religion, but to keep what has once for all been committed to her keeping, and to be at rest.¹²

But Newman could not be at rest. For all his resistance to social and individual change, he knew that he had changed and was changing and that no one should ever become set in their ways or convinced that there is no more to learn as some do:

They forget that all men are at best but learners in the school of Divine Truth, and that they themselves ought to be ever learning, and that they may be sure of the truth of their creed, without a like assurance in the details of religious opinion. They find it a much more comfortable view, much more agreeable to the indolence of human nature, to give over seeking, and to believe they had nothing more to find. A right faith is ever eager and on the watch, with quick eyes and ears, for tokens of God's will, whether He speak in the way of nature or of grace.¹³

Newman also knew from his own experience that change is a slow and inward process that may be

invisible not only to others but to the individual himself:

I am not speaking of cases when persons change their condition, their place in society, their pursuit, and the like; I am supposing them to remain pretty much the same as before in outward circumstances; but I say that many a man is conscious to himself of having undergone inwardly great changes of view as to what truth is and what happiness. Nor, again, am I speaking of changes so great, that a man reverses his former opinions and conduct. He may be able to see that there is a connexion between the two; that his former has led to his latter; and yet he may feel that after all they differ in kind; that he has got into a new world of thought, and measures things and persons by a different rule.¹⁴

That, of course, is exactly what happened to Newman.

Conversion in Newman's Sermons

Like their author, Newman's sermons grew and developed over time. Others have traced his early sermons with their three-point format and evangelical bias and the gradual shift to a more catholic theology and a simpler construction. My purpose here is to look specifically at the change in his preaching resulting from his allegiance to Rome and to concentrate again not so much on theological matters as on homiletical style. If we look carefully at some of the texts, before and after, what evidence would we find of conversion and what might it indicate about the conversion of the preacher?

To begin with the simplest and most obvious: Newman the Roman Catholic quotes the Douai translation of the Bible and not the King James Version. We would expect that the long process of inward change would have outward and visible signs, so this is not, perhaps, surprising, but it must have been difficult for a man who had studied and taught from one Bible for many years to make that change. We would notice, secondly, that the sermons of the latter period are, in general, shorter and more dynamic. The sermons of Newman's Anglican period range greatly in length, from just over 3000 words to almost 5000 — and then there are the *Oxford Uni-*

versity Sermons that are more than twice as long as the longest of the *Parochial and Plain Sermons* and probably ten times as long as the average sermon in the Episcopal Church today — but the Roman sermons are generally shorter than the shortest of the *Parochial and Plain Sermons* and rhetorically stronger. One might question the doctrines propounded, but they are put forward with a new strength and clarity as if a man who had been trying for many years to find his way and explain himself to himself had now at last come home to the certainty and security he had been seeking. The fact that Newman now preached without a text seems further evidence of that; as if he now knew his own mind without needing to think it through in advance and commit it to paper. No doubt he did think very carefully about what he wanted to say, but with less need to weigh options and alternatives. Now the path was straight and clear.

The first of the sermons Newman preached after his return to England in 1848 after becoming a priest of the Roman Church is an excellent example. At some 3,200 words, it is the longest of six from that period but nonetheless shorter than any of Newman's Anglican sermons. The sentences are shorter as well, an average of seventeen words per sentence as against a range between the mid twenties and low forties in the *Parochial and Plain Sermons*. He cannot help continuing to say, "You will observe," and "You observe," but the tone is less distancing. The argument is sharply focused and the rhythms are abrupt. "Argument," in fact, is too strong a word; Newman makes no attempt to argue a point, he simply makes assertions that brook no discussion. His topic is "The Omnipotence of God" and that omnipotence is pressed on the audience as grounds for believing:

Why do you believe all the strange and marvellous acts recorded in Scripture? Because God is almighty and can do them. Why do you believe that a Virgin conceived and bore a Son? Because it is God's act, and He can do anything. As the Angel Gabriel said to the Blessed Virgin, "No word is impossible with God." On the other hand, when holy Zacharias was told by the Angel that the old Elizabeth, his wife, should conceive, he said, "Whence shall I know this?" and he was punished at once for disbelieving. Why do you believe that our Lord rose from the dead? Why, that He

redeemed us all with His precious blood? Why, that He washes away our sins in Baptism? Why do you believe in the power and grace which attends the other sacraments? Why do you believe in the resurrection of our bodies? You believe it because nothing is too hard for God—because however wonderful a thing may be, He can do it. Why do you believe in the virtue of holy relics? Why do you believe that the Saints hear your prayers? Because nothing is too hard for the Lord.¹⁵

Newman had always maintained that reason followed faith and here it seems to be following far behind, but Newman now is preaching that doctrine with a new passion and clarity.

Newman preached much less often after leaving the Church of England and many of those sermons are much longer, but most were delivered on special occasions and have more of the character of lectures than sermons. There is space here only to discuss briefly one sermon that is of interest because Newman preached it twice (he often reworked a sermon and preached it two or three times) once before his trip to Rome and once after his return. It was a sermon about "doubting Thomas" and provided an obvious opportunity for Newman to hold forth on his favorite theme of the relationship between reason and faith.

In preaching first on St. Thomas in 1834, Newman sets out to demonstrate "the nature of [the] believing temper, and why it is blessed." He contrasts those who follow "the Voice which speaks within" with those who "prefer this world to the leadings of God's Spirit within them." Echoing the hymn "Lead, Kindly Light" which he had written a year and a half earlier, Newman says that "faith is content with a little light to begin its journey by. . . It rests content with the revelation made to it."¹⁶ Returning to the subject over twenty years later, Newman preached again about Thomas but now before the Catholic University in Dublin. More than ten years had gone by since his return to England from Rome and, perhaps because he is facing a university audience, Newman seems to have returned to his earlier style of writing. The sermon is longer by a quarter and the sentences are longer as well. Although the same general outline is followed and many of the Biblical reference are the same, the only identical phrase is the inevitable, "It is

to be observed,” and even that is in reference to a different subject. A significant part of each sermon compares two hypothetical men but they are introduced differently: in 1834 Newman said “. . . let us suppose two persons of strong mind . . .” whereas in 1856 he began with “now take a man from each of these two classes.” In the second sermon, however, Newman adds three closing paragraphs about “the man who has a drawing towards the Catholic Church, and resists it, on the plea that he has not sufficient proof of her claims.” His present audience also needs to be aware that as they “go into the world” and “hear sophistical objections made to the Church, her doctrine, and her rules” they may be led to ask the same questions. We might have expected that Newman would move next to discuss the value of questioning and doubt in leading to the use of reason to come to a fuller understanding. He had, after all, consistently suggested that reason was appropriately used after conscience had brought us to faith, but that line of thought is completely absent. On the contrary, the role of reason seems to be rejected out of hand. Much is said these days, Newman tells his hearers, about “Natural Theology and Evidences of Christianity . . . but I question much whether in matter of fact they make or keep men Christian.” So the sermon ends with the same doctrine Newman had commended long before: “. . . the best argument, better than all the books in the world, better than all that astronomy, and geology, and physiology, and all other sciences can supply . . . is that which arises out of a careful attention to the teachings of our heart.”¹⁷

Those teachings, prominent in the evangelical Christianity that Newman had first encountered and accepted, remained foundational for him, one constant in the midst of continuing change.

A note about sources for Newman’s sermons:

It has been calculated that Newman preached nearly 1,300 sermons during his nineteen years as a priest of the Church of England. That would come to 68 sermons a year but he often preached a sermon two or three times, always several years apart and with extensive revision. He himself published 217 of these but another 246 survived in manuscript form and are now being published for the first time under the title *John Henry Newman: Sermons 1824-1843*. These last are edited by Francis J. McGrath and Dom Placid

Murray, and three of the projected five volumes are now in print, published by Oxford University Press. The sermons Newman published include eight volumes under the title *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, one volume of *Oxford University Sermons*, and one volume titled *Sermons on Subjects of the Day*. Newman also published two volumes of sermons during his Roman years: *Faith and Prejudice and Other Sermons* and *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions*. These last, however, include a number of texts that would better be described as lectures. Some of Newman’s earlier sermons are also actually lectures and he described them that way himself.

NOTES

1. Both quotations in this paragraph may be found at <http://www.newmanreader.org/biography/death/file8.html>.
2. May 24, 1829; *Parochial and Plain Sermons* [hereafter *PPS*], Vol. 1, No. 15. All of the works referenced in these notes may be found online at <http://www.newmanreader.org/works/index.html>.
3. October 30, 1836; *PPS*, Vol. 8, No. 1.
4. February 21, 1829; *PPS* Vol. 3, No. 6.
5. December 18, 1825; *PPS* Vol. 8, No. 8.
6. October 27, 1840; *PPS* Vol.8, No. 2.
7. January 1, 1837; *Sermons on the Subject of the Day*.
8. Slavery was abolished in most of the Empire (excluding the territories of the East India Company) as of August 1, 1834, although the slaves were simply redesignated apprentices and not fully free until August 1, 1840. Newman preached the same sermon again almost four years later and almost a year before the final abolition of slavery in the Empire.
9. December 27, 1835; McGrath, Francis J. and Murray, Placid, *John Henry Newman, Sermons 1824-1843*] Vol. 3, No. 33.
10. May 2, 1830; *PPS* Vol. 8, No. 6.
11. July 4, 1841; *PPS* Vol.8, No. 3.
12. December 19, 1841, *PPS* Vol. 7, No. 18.
13. December 4, 1831, *PPS* Vol. 3, No. 8.
14. October. 27, 1839, *PPS* Vol. 8, No. 2.
15. January 30, 1848; *Faith and Prejudice*, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1956.
16. December 21, 1834; *PPS* Vol. 2, No. 2.
17. December 21, 1856; *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions*, No. 5.

Mary in Newman's Anglican Days

Reginald H. Fuller



BEFORE BEGINNING THIS ESSAY, I would like to tell you of an indirect connection which I can claim with John Henry Newman. From 1946-1950, I was assistant curate in the parish of St Bartholomew's, Edgebaston, next door to the Birmingham Oratory. I had in my congregation an elderly man who told me that he had heard Newman preach at the Oratory when he was a lad of 12, i.e., in 1889, shortly before Newman's death. So in the late forties there lived a man who had listened to the preaching of both John Henry Newman and Reginald H. Fuller!

In his *Apologia pro Vita Sua* Newman claimed that he had a devotion for the Virgin Mary from his early days. That devotion had deepened through his friendship with the maverick young Anglican Richard Hurrell Froude, and later on he could write again in his *Apologia*: "I had a true devotion to the blessed Virgin, in whose college [Oriel] I loved, whose altar I served [the Church of St Mary the Virgin, where he was Vicar from 1828 to 1843]." This essay will cover Newman's views on Mary during that period, drawing on two sermons, one at the beginning and the other at the end of that period, and on scattered observations in the *Apologia* and other writings of the period.

Summary of Newman's Anglican Career

John Henry Newman was born at Ealing, London, in 1801 and baptized and nurtured in the Church of England under Evangelical influences. He went up to Oxford in 1817 as an undergraduate in Trinity College. In 1822 he won a Fellowship at Oriel College where he remained for the rest of his Anglican career. As a Fellow he succeeded largely in reforming the tutorial system by making it much more pastoral in its character. This innovation was a remarkable achievement which was to have lasting effects on the Oxford system. When Newman first entered Oriel, it was a hot-bed of liberal theology, cultivated by a group known as the Noetics, and for a time Newman came under their influence. In 1825 he became Vicar of the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Oxford, an Oriel living and the University Church. Here he instituted the practice of regular preaching on Sundays and Holy Days and attracted a large audience of undergraduates.

The influence of the Noetics quickly passed when Newman became friendly with another Fellow, John Keble, nine years his senior, and with Froude, mentioned earlier. These new friends represented the older hereditary High Church Anglicanism, though Froude, as daring a thinker as he was daring a rider on horseback always barging ahead, moved beyond that position to a rejection of the English Reformation and a romantic yearning for medieval Catholicism. Under their influence Newman became a High Churchman and his churchmanship was reflected in his sermons. He

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became a keen student of the Fathers and in 1833 he published his first major work, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*. Meanwhile in 1832-33 he toured Europe with Froude. Interestingly, while in Rome he inquired about the terms on which Anglicans might be admitted to communion in the Roman Church and was surprised to learn that he would have to accept the decrees of the Council of Trent! While becalmed in the Adriatic, he wrote the famous hymn, "Lead, kindly Light." He returned to Oxford with a sense of mission. It was a time of crisis for the Church of England and there were fears of disestablishment in the air. In the fall of that year Newman and a group of High Churchmen began to publish the *Tracts for the Times*, popular statements of the High Church position which for the first two and a half years represented a recovery and reaffirmation of classical Anglicanism. The *Tracts* emphasized that the Church's authority rested not on Establishment but on apostolic descent. In early 1836, however, the tone of the *Tracts* changed. They now sought to go back behind the Reformation settlement and the official documents of the Anglican Church — the Book of Common Prayer, the Articles of Religion, and the Homilies — and to rediscover forgotten teachings of the Fathers and reintroduce them into contemporary Anglicanism as a *via media* between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. He also propounded the so-called "branch theory." Anglicanism was presented as one of three branches into which the Catholic Church had unfortunately been divided, the other two branches being the Eastern and Latin communions. This was a departure from traditional Anglican self-understanding. Until this time Anglicans, even High Churchmen, had understood their Church as one of the churches of the Reformation, though one which retained and valued more Catholic elements than the others, especially the episcopate in historic succession. What was new was that these Catholic elements were being asserted in an exclusive way so as to un-church those communions that had lost them. Two indications of the novelty of the later Tractarian position were the stand they took against the Martyrs' Memorial, erected at Oxford in 1838, and the Anglo-Prussian Jerusalem bishopric inaugurated in 1841. Meanwhile, Newman gave expression to his theory of the *via media* in his two

works, *The Prophetical Office of the Church* (1837) and his *Lectures on Justification* (1838).

By 1839 Newman came to have doubts about the *via media*. As he came to see it, the *via media* existed only on paper. One shock was his discovery in 1839 that the Anglican position was analogous to that of the Monophysites of the fifth century. Another was Nicholas Wiseman's essay on Anglican claims that drew a similar analogy between the Donatists and contemporary Anglicanism. Wiseman quoted Augustine's famous words, *securus iudicat orbis terrarum* — in Newman's own translation, "The universal Church, in her judgments, is sure of the truth" — words that for the next few years Newman could not get out of his head.

In 1841 Newman published the last and most famous of the *Tracts*, number 90, to which we shall have occasion to refer later. The furor which this *Tract* provoked, including its condemnation by his own bishop, Richard Bagot of Oxford, led him to withdraw from his position of leadership in the Tractarian movement. In 1843 he resigned his living and retired to the neighboring village of Littlemore, where he established a sort of monastic community that he called in Greek *moné*. Shortly after resigning St Mary's, Newman preached a celebrated sermon entitled "The Parting of Friends" in the church at Littlemore, at the end of which he tore off his Oxford M.A. hood as a sign that he was no longer a teacher in the Church of England. But the agony of his deathbed as an Anglican was long and drawn-out. He spent the next two years justifying his growing belief that the Roman Church was the authentic heir of the church of the Fathers by means of a work entitled *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. He had scarcely finished this essay when he was received into the Roman Catholic Church on October 9, 1845. For half of his life he had been an Anglican: he was to live another forty-five years as a Roman Catholic.

The Annunciation Sermon

On the Feast of the Annunciation in 1832 Newman preached a sermon entitled "The Reverence Due to the Virgin Mary." It is based firmly and exclusively on Holy Scripture and the Prayer Book of 1662. He begins by noting those passages in Luke in which Mary is addressed by the

angel Gabriel as blessed and highly favored. Then he goes on to detail the similar appellations addressed to Mary by Elisabeth at the Visitation. He observes that on this occasion “Mary gave utterance to her feelings in the hymn which we read in the Evening Service,” referring to the *Magnificat* recited daily in the office of the Book of Common Prayer. The angel Gabriel announced her future role in salvation history which was to reverse the fall of guilty Eve. Newman then proceeds to analyze the various ways in which Mary is blessed. First, Christ chose her to be the one through whom he came to earth. He might have assumed a body from the ground, like Adam; or have been formed like Eve in some other way divinely devised. But God sent forth his son, “made of a woman.” Secondly, Mary has reversed for all women the consequence of the Fall, that her husband should have dominion over her. Because of Mary, “Marriage has been restored not only to its original dignity,” but even has become “the outward symbol of the heavenly union subsisting betwixt Christ and his Church.” Thirdly, Mary is honored because of her holiness and perfection. These qualities, however, are due not to some innate possession, but

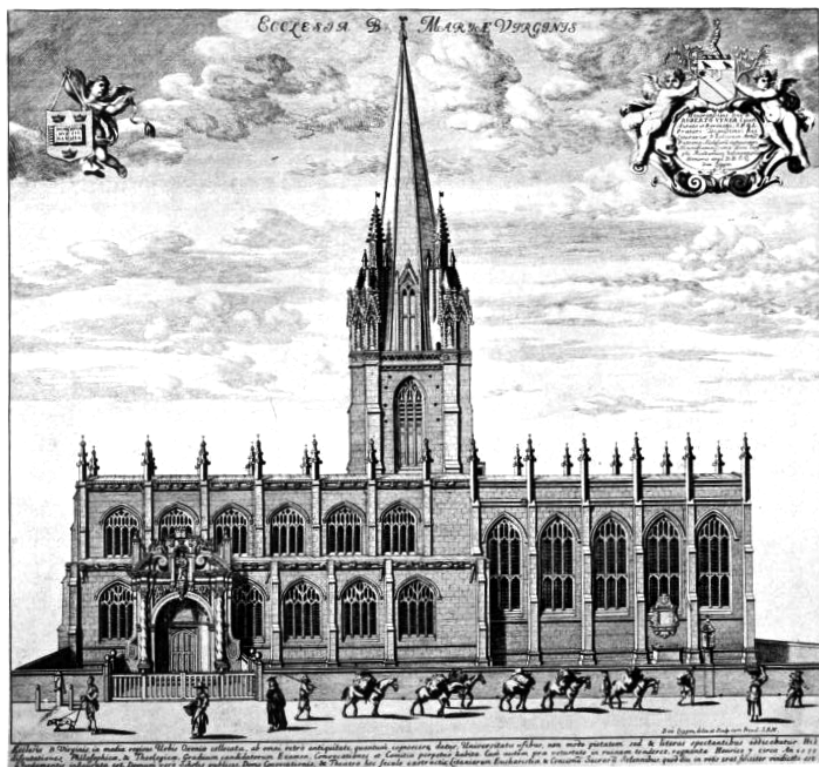
solely to the grace of God. As Newman pointed out later in the sermon, and again reiterated in a sermon on the Incarnation the following Christmas, Mary was by nature a sinner and only a creature. He makes a great point of the fact that the Church of England has only two Marian feasts, the Purification (February 2) and the Annunciation (March 25), both of which are primarily feasts of the Incarnation. Mary is nothing apart from Christ. The rest of the sermon is taken up with a discussion of the silence of Scripture about Mary, especially after the Ascension. The reason for this silence, so stated Newman, is to prevent us from thinking too much of Mary and too little of her Son.

How authentically Anglican Newman was at this time! Catholic in his insistence on the centrality of the Incarnation, reformed in his insistence that Mary was what she was solely by the grace of God.

The Tractarian Period, 1833-1841

In the year after his Annunciation sermon, Newman was instrumental in inaugurating the *Tracts* that led to the Catholic revival in the Church of England and transformed the face of Anglicanism.

There is very little in this period that discusses Newman’s beliefs about Mary or his devotion to her. But the *Tracts* do discuss the communion of the saints as an article of the Creed. What does this communion mean in practice? To answer this question, Newman has to wrestle with the intercession of the saints in heaven and the invocation of them by the church on earth. He believes that the invisible church in heaven encourages the visible church on earth, urging on the faithful by example and sympathizing with them in their struggles. By 1834 Newman has no doubt that the saints do pray for us. But the invocation of the saints remains a problem. As a loyal Anglican, he knows that Article XXII stigmatizes that practice, or at least “the Romish Doctrine” on this subject, as a “fond thing, vainly invented.” Such invocation compromises the sole



An early 18th century engraving of the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Oxford

mediatorship of Christ according to his opinion at the time, and we have no assurance of a direct line of communication with the saints. However, Newman was feeling his way to a belief in the legitimacy of what we might call the practice of apostrophizing the saints as we do in the *Benedicite*: “O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord!” Apostrophe is a rhetorical recognition of our communion with the saints in worship and prayer. Newman emphatically rejects the claim of popular Roman piety — which in this case was not Roman doctrine — that Mary rescues souls from purgatory.

During the years of the *via media* (1837-1839), Newman was puzzling over the problem of the relative authority of Scripture and the Church Fathers. He considered that popular Roman piety (which he was learning to distinguish from the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church) compromised the doctrine of the Trinity by its exaggerated veneration of Mary, which is in direct contradiction to the teaching of Scripture and the Fathers. At the same time, the posthumous publication of Froude’s *Remains*, edited by John Keble (1838-1839), led Newman to a higher estimate of Mary as the embodiment of virginity.

The Doctrine of Development and the Sermon on the Purification

Newman was eventually to find the answer to the problem of Rome and the Church of the Fathers in the doctrine of development. The problem became acute for him after the *via media* collapsed under the impact of his study of Monophysitism and Wiseman’s essay on Anglican claims. If the Church of England was not the true representative today of the ancient church of the Fathers and if Rome had added doctrines to those of the Father and pious practices inconsistent with those doctrines, where was the church of the Fathers? Only Rome, it appeared, embodied what is present in the Fathers. So Newman must be able to prove that Rome’s additions of doctrine and piety were legitimate developments of the doctrines of the Fathers. His first attempt in this direction came in a sermon preached on the Feast of the Purification in his last year at St Mary’s, 1843. It is entitled, “The Theory of Development in Christian Doctrine” (Parochial Sermons XV). The text of the sermon was Luke

2:10, “Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” Newman presents Mary as the pattern of faith. This is exhibited first by her fiat, but also in the fact that she “pondered” these things and “kept them in her heart.” This makes her a model for theological reflection on divine truth, both for the simple believer and also for the doctors of the Church whose task it is “to investigate, to weigh, and to defend as well as to profess the gospel,” to draw the line between truth and heresy. Mary thus provided Newman with a foundation for his doctrine of development. Development is the result of the investigation, weighing, and defense of divine truth.

This lien of thought was elaborated and made concrete in his last writing before his secession, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845). It justifies his willingness at last to accept the Roman Catholic Church as the true representative of the church of the Fathers. With regard to Mary, Rome carefully distinguished between *douleia* (honor, praise) and *latría* (worship). The veneration paid to Mary is no denial of the worship paid to God alone. She is prayed to, not as the ultimate source of redemption, but as its created medium. These devotions are legitimate developments of the scriptural doctrine of Mary as the Virgin Mother of Christ and of the patristic and conciliar doctrine of Mary as the *theotokos*. Moreover, the later devotions are a bulwark and defense of the scriptural and patristic doctrines. Protestants who had refused the veneration due to Mary ended up by denying the Incarnation itself and refusing the worship of Christ. So far from undermining ancient doctrines, contemporary Roman doctrine and practice effectively preserved it.

Conclusion

With his doctrine of development, Newman ceased to be an Anglican, but the basic conviction with which he started in 1832 was as strong as ever in 1845. This was his whole-hearted acceptance of the dogma of the Incarnation. We honor Mary for the sake of Christ alone.

John Henry Cardinal Newman's Catholic Mariology

Troy A. Stefano

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN was as intellectually dedicated to a theological and historical consideration of Mariology as he was affectively devoted to Mary. Newman's writings on the Mother of God can be divided chronologically into three groups: those written while he was a committed Anglican (c. 1823-c. 1839), those written during his transitional period (c. 1839-1845), and those written as a Catholic (1845-1890). This article focuses on the last two periods, with particular attention to important underlying points of continuity in his thought. Newman maintained a sense of devotion to the Mother of our Lord that served as a common denominator for each of these periods. His later considerations of Mary, however, are more theological than devotional insofar as their intellectual context is his understanding of the development of doctrine, and thus a broader grasp of the scope of historical theology than was operative for him prior to his period of transition.

Nearly ten years after his reception into the Catholic Church in October, 1849, much dissention arose regarding the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in the apostolic constitution *Ineffabilis Deus* of 1854. This definition was promulgated *ex cathedra*, an expression of papal infallibility that bound its acceptance to the consciences of all faithful Catholics. In Newman's addresses to the negative reactions of evangelical Anglicans and English protestants, he suggests that at issue was not so much the Marian dogma proclaimed as was the exercise of papal (and ecclesial) power in defining it. Newman writes in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1865), regarding his earlier life between 1841 to 1845, "Such devotional manifestations [as St. Alfonso Ligurori's *Sermons*] in honour of our Lady had been my great crux as regards Catholicism; I say frankly, I do not fully enter into them now; I trust I do not love her the less, because I cannot enter into them."¹ He observes that the circulation of such extreme pieces of Marian devotion prejudiced him regarding the Roman

Church, on account of what was commonly called Catholicism's "Mariolatry."²

Regarding his Anglican days, Newman recalls, "I had a true devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in whose College I lived, whose Altar I served, and whose Immaculate Purity I had in one of my earliest printed Sermons made much of."³ That sermon was delivered on the Feast of the Annunciation in 1835, roughly ten years before his reception into Roman Catholicism. In it, he speaks of the reverence due to the Virgin Mary as the Second Eve, as the Mother of God, and as the Chief of the undefiled followers of Christ. Newman preached:

Strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, she "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief;" she believed when Zacharias doubted, — with a faith like Abraham's she believed and was blessed for her belief, and had the performance of those things which were told her by the Lord. And when sorrow came upon her afterwards, it was but the blessed participation of her Son's sacred sorrows, not the sorrow of those who suffer for their sins.⁴

Even after becoming a Catholic, Newman's life of devotion was always correlated with such a deepened understanding of doctrine, leading him to distinguish between distinct national forms of popular piety, such as the Italian or English, both of which may be legitimately, albeit distinctly, rooted in the ancient Church of the Fathers.

The work that most explicitly marks the beginnings of his period of transition is a parochial sermon for the Feast of the Purification, "The Theory of Development in Christian Doctrine," offered in his

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last year at St. Mary's in 1843. In expounding on Luke 2:19, "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart," he described Mary as the archetype of the individual and collective faith of the Christian community. In Newman's own words,

She does not think it enough to accept, she dwells upon it; not enough to possess, she uses it; not enough to assent, she develops it; not enough to submit the Reason, she reasons upon it; not indeed reasoning first, and believing afterwards, with Zacharias, yet first believing without reasoning, next from love and reference, reasoning after believing. And thus she symbolizes to us, not only the faith of the unlearned, but of the doctors of the Church also, who have to investigate, and weigh, and define, as well as to profess the Gospel; to draw the line between truth and heresy; to anticipate or remedy the various aberrations of wrong reason; to combat pride and recklessness with their own arms; and thus to triumph over the sophist and the innovator.⁵

According to Newman, the Church, like Mary, collectively "dwells upon" and "develops" its inward ideas and impressions of divine truth into articulations of Revealed Truth. But this properly Marian process in no way exhausts that Truth, which is ultimately not a proposition but Christ himself — who as one person human and divine is inexhaustible.⁶ This described process receives its fullest treatment in his *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* of 1845, in which he considers "Doctrinal Developments Viewed in Themselves" in the first part and "Doctrinal Developments Viewed Relatively to Doctrinal Corruptions" in the second. Newman writes,

the increase and expansion of the Christian Creed and Ritual, and the variations which have attended the process in the case of individual writers and Churches, are necessary attendants on any philosophy or polity which takes possession of the intellect and heart, and has any wide or extended dominion; that, from the nature of the human mind, time is necessary for the full comprehension and perfection of great ideas; and that the highest

and most wonderful truths, though communicated to the world once for all by inspired teachers, could not be comprehended all at once by the recipients, but, as being received and transmitted by minds not inspired and through media which were human, have required only the longer time and deeper thought for their full elucidation. This may be called the *Theory of Development of Doctrine*.⁷

His argument carries with it an air of reasonableness and the rhetorical gravity of the unity-in-diversity of the Christian theological tradition. Newman makes the case that Christianity exists in the public sphere of thought and discourse, and is thus subject to the natural course of human development of ideas; in his own words, "It has from the first had an objective existence, and has thrown itself upon the great concourse of men. Its home is in the world; and to know what it is, we must seek it in the world, and hear the world's witness of it."⁸

The relationship between the source of Christianity and its objective existence in the world as it is encountered and experienced is what he terms the process of development, the natural concourse of a seed into its full fruition:

This process, whether it be longer or shorter in point of time, by which the aspects of an idea are brought into consistency and form, I call its development, being the germination and maturation of some truth or apparent truth on a large mental field. . . . The development then of an idea is not like an investigation worked out on paper, in which each successive advance is a pure evolution from the foregoing, but it is carried on through and by means of communities of men and their leaders and guides; and it employs their minds as its instruments, and depends upon them, while it uses them.⁹

Newman's understanding of that which constitutes an historical "idea" is sufficiently broad that it allows the category of idea to encapsulate all things Christian. He does not make an arbitrary dichotomy between *theoria* and *praxis*, *contemplatio* and *actio*, to the effect that he reduces Christianity to its intellectual and

theoretical proclamations; rather, he allows for mutually developmental roles among *lex orandi*, *lex credendi* and *lex agendi*, under a specific category that he terms “ethical developments.” The most central idea of Christianity, its most foundational doctrine, is the Incarnation. This is the most basic idea from which all development proceeds; the incarnation is the river that flows, the complex irrigation of history that meets the hearts and minds of men and women through the ages, and yet continues to stream as it becomes further contained in little cracks and crevices, the various articulations of theology. Newman enumerates five different kinds of development which have an influence on Christianity: political, logical, historical, ethical, and metaphysical developments. Each of these orbits around the Incarnational center, the Christic Sun of Christianity’s universe, such that when considering Mary, for example, in relation to the identity of the Son, one must confess her as *Theotokos*, the Mother of God, since all theological claims must be relativized to our understanding of the Christianity’s central idea, the Incarnation.¹⁰

This is the context in which Newman addresses questions regarding the office of the Blessed Virgin and the devotion paid to her. He presents a litany of patristic citations and the writings of controversies to demonstrate that there is a mono-directional, absolute dependence, both historically and logically, of Mariology upon Christology. Viewed in the history of biblical exegesis, the inevitable consequence, Newman avers, of St. Augustine’s treatment of the question of the Old Testament theophanies as created mediums of the divine presence offers the theological (and historical) provocation for the introduction of the *cultus Sanctorum*, since “if those appearances were creatures, certainly creatures were worshipped by the Patriarchs, not indeed in themselves, but as the token of a Presence greater than themselves.”¹¹ In response to Arianism, notes Newman, Athanasius proclaimed that it was not the Word *qua* Word that was exulted and glorified, but the human nature which he, being truly God, assumed; thus, “Christ, in rising, raises His

saints with Him to the right hand of power. They become instinct with His life, of one body with His flesh, divine sons, immortal kings, gods. He is in them, because He is in human nature; and He communicates to them that nature, deified by becoming His, that them It may deify. He is in them by the Presence of His Spirit, and in them He is seen.”¹² The theological consequence of proclaiming

that the eternally-begotten Word became human flesh is a redefining of human nature, thereby eliciting the possibility of divine and exulted appellations and honorary titles for the saints, which are always (and always only) analogical correlatives of the Lord who abides and lives in them, among which Mary stands the brightest and the best.

In a later work, *A Letter to the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D., on His Recent Eirenicon*, written in 1866, Newman more explicitly treats questions of Mariology and more

clearly distinguishes between faith and devotion: “I fully grant that devotion toward the Blessed Virgin has increased among Catholics with the progress of the centuries; I do not allow that the doctrine concerning her has undergone a growth, for I believe that has been in substance one and the same from the beginning.”¹³ Much like Hans Urs von Balthasar would do after him, Newman seeks the fundamental Marian principle, that is, “the *prima facie* view of her person and office, the broad outline laid down of her, the aspect under which she comes to us, in the writings of the Fathers.”¹⁴ In keeping with his understanding of the development of ideas, and the centrality of the Incarnation, Newman inquires into the basis of all Marian discourse, whether intellectual or affective, in the orders of history and logic: she is the second Eve.¹⁵ For Newman this interpretation seems undeniable on account of the parallel with the Old Testament involved; but its significance rests on the fact that this parallelism is the doctrine of the Fathers, from the earliest of times. “This being established,” Newman posits, “by the position and office of Eve in our fall, we are able to determine the position and office of Mary in our restoration.”¹⁶



John Henry Newman, c. 1850

He treats two inferences that are logically and historically adduced from the “rudimental doctrine itself”: her sanctity and her greatness. The underlying parallel in the inversion of Eve’s sinfulness with Mary’s sanctity serves as the historico-logical provocation for such dogmatic proclamations as the Immaculate Conception, whereas the emphasis on her greatness contextualizes her role in the economy of Grace, eliciting the titles of *Theotokos*, *Deipara*, “Mother of God,” and the like. For Newman, the significance of such a process rests in the fact that it is not he who deduces such conclusions, but the Church of history, the Fathers of the Church. By extension, in treating the question of her intercessory role, Newman claims that it is the inevitable result of two truths, both dependent on the Incarnation of the Word in the person of Jesus Christ: first, that one should suppliantly invoke the saints and have recourse to their prayers; and second, that “the Blessed Mary is singularly dear to her Son and singularly exalted in sanctity and glory.”¹⁷ That one should or could make intercessory prayer to the Virgin Mary does not seem to be the issue at hand, but *in what manner* one should do so — given the apparent excesses in Catholic devotion from the perspective of his protestant audience. Newman’s response maintains its gaze upon the Incarnate Lord as central; yet his universe is freighted with a sacramental quality in which all things in heaven and earth, and especially the saints,



John Henry Cardinal Newman, c. 1889

symbolize and make present the one Lord in whom they participate and who dwells in them:

May God’s mercy keep me from the shadow of a thought dimming the light or blunting the keenness of that love for Him, which is our sole happiness and our sole salvation! But when He became man He brought home to us His incommunicable attributes with a distinctiveness that precludes the possibility of our lowering Him by exalting a creature. He alone has an entrance into our soul, reads our secret thoughts, speaks to our heart, applies to us spiritual pardon and strength. On Him we solely depend. He alone is our inward life; He not only regenerates us, but (to allude to a higher mystery) *semper gignit*; He is ever renewing our new birth and our heavenly sonship. In this sense He may be called, as in nature, so in grace, our real father. Mary is only our adopted mother, given us from the cross; her presence is above, not on earth; her office is external, not within us. Her name is not heard in the administration of the Sacraments. Her work is not one of ministration towards us; her power is indirect. It is her prayers that avail, and they are effectual by the *fiat* of Him who is our all in all. Nor does she hear us by any innate power, or any personal gift; but by His manifestation to her of the prayers which we make her. When Moses was on the Mount, the Almighty told him of the idolatry of his people at the foot of it, in order that he might intercede for them; and thus it is the Divine Presence which is the intermediating Power by which we reach her and she reaches us.¹⁸

This is the understanding of the nature of mediation and intercession to which Newman makes recourse in attempting to explain the most devotional (and controversial) Marian writings, such as those of St. Alphonsus de Liguori or St. Louis de Montfort.

In treating such Catholic writings, Newman makes the distinction between different nationalistic tendencies in devotion. Even in his elderly days as a Cardinal, his manner of devotion to Mary was not that of an Italian brand, though he would confess to have

no less love for her.¹⁹ Newman preached and offered discourses on Mary on many occasions, especially in his Catholic years, such as his discourses on “The Glories of Mary for the Sake of Her Son” and “On the Fitness of the Glories of Mary” in 1849. He also wrote many Meditations and Devotions, including litanies, on the Blessed Virgin, reflecting upon her Immaculate Conception, the Annunciation, her Sorrows, the Assumption, among other topics. Newman’s spirituality, even to his last, viewed Mary sacramentally — as one who makes present the Risen Lord whom she signifies:

When strangers are so unfavorably impressed with us, because they see Images of our Lady in our Churches, and crowds flocking about her, they forget that there is a Presence within the sacred walls, infinitely more awful, which claims and obtains from us a worship transcendently different from any devotion we pay to her. That devotion might indeed tend to idolatry, if it were encouraged in Protestant Churches, where there is nothing higher than it to attract the worshipper; but all the images that a Catholic Church ever contained, all the Crucifixes at its Altars brought together, do not so affect its frequenters, as the lamp which betokens the presence or absence there of the blessed sacrament.²⁰

To the end of his life, the Cardinal maintained his gaze on the Second Eve, his prayers towards the *Theotokos*, his devotion for the Immaculately Conceived; and he unfailingly saw in her face, heard in her petitions, and paid his devotions to, not the Mother in these things extolled, but the Son who made his dwelling in her.

NOTES

1. John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, ed. by Ian Ker (London: Penguin, 1994), 179.
2. *Ibid.*, 179.
3. *Ibid.*, 155.
4. John Henry Newman, “Sermon 12. The Reverence Due to the Virgin Mary,” in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1908), 137.
5. John Henry Newman, “Sermon 15. The Theory of developments in Religious Doctrine,” in *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909) 313-314.
6. Cf. *ibid.*, 313; 319-321.
7. John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, sixth edition (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 29-30.
8. *Ibid.*, 3-4.
9. *Ibid.*, 38.
10. Newman would understand the term *Theotokos* to be an example of a logical development; see *ibid.*, 54. Newman treats the question of the relationship between “Our Lord’s Incarnation, and the dignity of His Mother and of all Saints,” in Chapter IV, Section 2, in which he writes, “The votaries of Mary do not exceed the true faith, unless the blasphemers of her Son came upon it. The Church of Rome is not idolatrous, unless Arianism is orthodox”; *ibid.*, 144.
11. *Ibid.*, 138.
12. *Ibid.*, 140.
13. John Henry Newman, *A Letter to the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D., on His Recent Eirenicon* (New York: Lawrence Kehoe, 1866), 16.
14. *Ibid.*, 18. For Hans Urs von Balthasar, the fundamental Marian principle is found in Mary’s role as *Theotokos*; see Hans Urs von Balthasar, “The Marian Principle,” in *idem, Elucidations*, tr. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), 101-113.
15. Newman, *Letter*, 18-28.
16. *Ibid.*, 19.
17. *Ibid.*, 37.
18. *Ibid.*, 44-45.
19. Newman, *Apologia*, 179.
20. Newman, *Letter*, 49.