**Presentation Schedule in Detail**

**Friday, July 31:**  
6:30pm-7:20 – Session #1 A, B, C

**Room A**  
Mary Oberle Hubley, *Saint John Henry Newman’s Poetry in Liturgical Song*  
The canonization of John Henry Newman (1801-1890) in October of 2019 inspires interest in this literary Englishman’s lifelong practice of composing poetry. When he was 35, for example, Newman and several gifted poetry-minded friends joined in compiling their verses into a small printed volume. Thirty years later, Newman collected altogether his prodigious corpus of 180 poems and verses, including his verse translations of ancient Christian hymns. These were all published in 1867 as Verses on Various Occasions. It is a happy coincidence that John Henry Newman wrote many verses in iambic pentameter meter: a poetic pattern of five accents, or stresses, per line. Because of this, some of Newman’s poetic texts conform to the musical structure of a number of Gate of Heaven hymns. Through use of the ancient practice of contrafacta (the substitution of a text or poem into a specific melody, without any alteration of the melody), nine selections from the Saint’s poetry are here presented. They are clothed, as it were, in the same hymn music as Lead, Kindly Light (n. 38). Through these verses, one may gain more than a glimpse of the man later to be proclaimed a saint: his keen sense of conscience, his moral sensitivity, and his depth of human feeling.

**Room B**  
Our modern world is suffering greatly: wars, poverty, forced mass immigration, the COVID-19 pandemic, the list could go on and on. At the same time, much of the West has forgotten how to suffer—the elderly and the terminally ill turn to euthanasia to escape their pain, and American society has encouraged it. Men and women of faith unable to cope see their suffering as irreconcilable with God’s love and leave the Church. Rather than accompanying the poor and marginalized, society turns a blind eye towards them, perhaps throwing some money their way, but otherwise ignoring them, lest the realization of their humanity and their sorrow cause us inner anguish. St. John Henry Newman’s mariology, especially his understanding of Mary’s suffering, offers a remedy to this predicament. His meditations on Mary’s Dolours in the Meditations and Devotions provide an image of Mary as one who can teach us how to suffer well and can comfort us in our own physical and spiritual suffering. My paper will investigate these meditations in detail, with an emphasis on their pastoral implications for the sick and dying, their caregivers, and our broader society today.

**Room C**  
Dr. Donald Graham, *Spiritual notes for our secular age: the perspicuity of Newman’s “Tamworth Reading Room”*  
In his meta-narrative, A Secular Age, Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor, coined the celebrated phrase, “the immanent frame,” to speak of the complex process by which western societies have fashioned “imaginaries” within which its members, including Christians, increasingly have sought intra-mundane fulfilment for transcendent longings. Against this backdrop, my paper ponders prophetic observations of John Henry Newman, as contained in

7:30-8:20 –Session #2 A, B, C

Room A

Dr. Ron Snyder, Doubt and Devotion: A Layman’s Odyssey with Saint John Henry Newman

St. John Henry Newman makes a critical distinction when he contends that “real and proper doubt kills faith, and devotion with it”. The aim of this paper is to unravel this distinction through my personal odyssey with our patron. First, I will define both doubt and faith explaining how they arise both naturally and historically. Next, I will show Newman’s treatment of these notions. Finally, I will present how Newman has helped tutor me on the importance of this distinction.

Room B

Ryan Kerr, C.S.C., Antichrist, the Cross, and Christian Education

St. John Henry Newman delivered four sermons about the antichrist which must seem enigmatic to the modern reader. Apocalyptic writing, that mystical expression of eschatological revelation, may seem outmoded or irrelevant, overly-pious musings. Instead of trying to recapitulate them in their entirety, I will attempt to distill from these writings a few points about the nature of the man of sin whose contrast will ultimately illuminate for us the Incarnate Word. The antichrist, in his effort to closely imitate the Divine Image, will present himself to the world as truth and as an object of glory or worship inviting the world into a final apostasy. A breakdown in the fundamental understandings of education and truth then becomes both a potential target of the antichrist as well as a possible means through which Divine Truth may call out, in the grace of humility, to gather the flock back to truth. The Cross will become the point of contact and intersection by which Newman’s description of the Church in persecution may trust in an unshakeable foundation of hope.

Room C


St. John Henry Newman’s first attempt at an public explanation for crossing the Tiber, Loss and Gain, offers a surprising look into “a heart talking to a heart.” That heart wants penance as a means to holiness. Many converts are drawn to Rome by beauty, but the protagonist Charles Reding is especially lured by the penitential liturgical devotion of Roman Rite worship. Indeed, the comforts of the Church of England, the easy dispensation of fast days, the solicitude of servants for clerics—these in fact function like the first temptation of bread to the protagonist Charles Reding, and he rejects them for the austerity of celibacy. The intense desire for penance is the astonishing doorway to Reding’s conversion. In Newman’s own Anglican life, judging from letters and diaries, comfort alienated him from God, and penance drew him closer. Two thirds into the novel, he shocks his readers with a Gothic night scene of a penitent in the countryside scourging himself before a crucifix. At the climax, the
Passionist convent where Charles is received into the church is praised for its arresting tradition of public scourging with “razors and discipline.” This fictional apologia pro sua vita makes a contemporary appeal to hearts who desire not bandages in a field hospital but the razors of fasting and self-denial. They may not quarry the granite rock, but they can tame the wayward will and spur on frozen deliberations.

**Saturday, August 1:**

9:00am-9:50 – Session #3 A, B, C

**Room A**

Dr. Michele Kueter Petersen, **John Henry Newman and Edith Stein: Two Saints Whose Time Has Come**

John Henry Newman and Edith Stein are exemplars whose time has come. They are saints for our time. Saints, as exemplars, perform in and through their very lives the “how,” and therefore demonstrate the way things really are. They pursue truth through cognitional self-transcendence and by living into the reality that their words point to: a living mysticism that includes a universe filled with being and a personal relationship that unfolds from within. The integration of human faculties and powers is accomplished by engaging the difficult questions of the day in both cultural and religious terms. Such a life of grace entails sacramental powers and is a sign for our time. In Part 1, I shall focus on temporality and enumerate some important qualities associated with critical and self-critical thinking in their thought. In Part 2, I shall discuss their devotional life of contemplation. And, in Part 3, I shall elucidate the movement that characterizes their relational existence.

10:00-10:50 – Session #4 A, B, C

**Room A**

Rev. Jerome Day, O.S.B., Ph.D, **Newman’s Use of Saint Benedict for the Idea of a Saint**

J.H. Newman (1801-1890) makes more than passing reference to Saint Benedict of Nursia (480-547) in his work. Given this year’s Newman Association of America (NAA) conference theme, “John Henry Newman: A Saint for Our Season,” it might be instructive to explore...
how the 6th century Father of Western Monasticism and the 19th Century leader of the Anglo-Catholic movement in the United Kingdom understood the central elements of Christian discipleship and their relationship to sanctity. While Newman’s actual exposure to Benedictine life might have been slight, even superficial, as one of my monastic confreres observed several years ago in his paper at the Newman conference at Saint Anselm, the cardinal’s – and now saint’s – interest in the ancient Church, out of which Saint Benedict emerges, and his awareness of the Benedictine influence on Britain was intense – and perhaps a bit romanticized. Yet Benedict’s vision, and that of those who followed him, helped transform culture in much of the Anglo-American world. Undergirding this vision is an approach to sanctity that connects to important features of communication theory – the role of performance and the dramaturgical turn in creating and establishing meaning. Communication scholars Erving Goffman and Kenneth Burke both offer insights to help clarify what Benedict seeks to establish in his Holy Rule and what Newman found both attractive and compelling 14 centuries later. The paper would also touch the performative and dramaturgical in the process of human learning, growth and development, especially as they are ordered to the theological process of sanctification. Obviously, the roles of sacred scripture, sacraments, prayer, silence and community will play a part in this presentation.

Room B


While there are many ways in which John Henry Newman might be declared a “Saint for our Season,” arguably his Mariology represents an important and often overlooked example. Newman’s mature position on our Lady as articulated during his Catholic period has much to offer the contemporary Church in her desire to be both evangelical and ecumenical. Specifically, his distinction (though not separation) between a fitting Marian theology and a heartfelt devotion is of tremendous value. In this essay I shall argue that Newman’s mature Mariology—as found in his two Marian Discourses to Mixed Congregations and his Letter to Pusey—offers a robust vision of our Lady that is true to patristic tradition, ecumenically sensitive, and sufficiently flexible to evangelizing various cultures and contexts. Additionally, I should like to highlight how Newman’s mature Mariology anticipates most fully the teaching of the Second Vatican Council in the eighth chapter of Lumen Gentium. As in other areas, Newman’s Mariology once again makes him the ‘absent father’ of Vatican II. In this manner my essay will offer a new vision as to Newman’s ongoing relevance for the contemporary Church.

Room C

Brayden Hirsch, “Grand Words for a Common Thing”: Classical Epistemology and the Illative Sense

If ideas develop like rivers from springs, as Newman believed, students of his philosophy might ask whether the illative sense is a spring or a river. Put another way, is Newman’s foremost philosophical innovation a new idea, or the culmination of old ones? In The Grammar of Assent, Newman likened the illative sense to Aristotelian phronēsis, but also admitted the insufficiency of phronēsis for epistemology. J. Hochschild has demonstrated how the illative sense is nevertheless Aristotelian, resulting from a “creative” interpretation of Aristotle. More than this, however, I believe that when Newman called it a “grand word for a common thing,” he meant that the very notion is not at all unique to the classical philosophical tradition. Rather, the streams of classical epistemology, so to speak, all flow into the illative sense. In my presentation, by drawing not only from Aristotle but also Plato...
and Cicero, I propose that the illative sense is a thoroughly classical solution to what Mortimer Adler called a “particularly modern problem”: the dichotomy between philosophy and common sense.

11:15-12:30 – Plenary Keynote Session
Fr. Ian Ker, Fellow, Blackfriars Oxford

Lunch Break

1:30pm-2:20 – Session #5 A, B, C

Room A
Christopher Enabnit, The Contested Roles of Grammar and Witness in Newman’s German Reception
In his Twilight of the Idols, Nietzsche wrote, “I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar.” Theodor Haecker, St. John Henry Newman’s principal translator into the German language interpreted such a line in favor of grammar’s integral role in the act of faith, exemplified in Newman’s Grammar of Assent. Konrad Weiß, however, recognized a danger in this elevation of grammar, warning that an overweening exercise thereof could result in the neutralization of language, rendering impossible the communication of genuine experience, of witness. Although St. John Henry Newman bestowed the title of a Grammar of Assent to his principal work in religious epistemology, he does not present an unambiguous account of grammar’s merits. Newman considers grammar to be a notional activity which complements activities in real apprehension such as philosophy and poetry, broadening their range of investigation and ensuring the possibility of discourse. Grammar’s relationship with philosophy and poetry exists in a tension, however, the balance of which was important in Newman’s German reception. This paper follows the contested role of grammar from Newman to Haecker and Weiß’s discourse, and considers the role of each man as writer and witness.

Room B
Dr. Mark Jubulis, Saint John Henry Newman’s Witness in a Secular Age: A Question of Integrity for the Contemporary Catholic University
Saint John Henry Newman’s Idea of a University established an ideal image of a proper University education that follows from the recognition of the unity of all knowledge. While his insights regarding the importance of theology in holding the “circle of knowledge” together would be ignored in the contemporary public or secular university, his arguments should continue to inspire Catholic colleges and universities that still maintain mission statements dedicated to a genuinely Catholic vision of education. Catholic universities have a special role to play as witnesses to truth in our secular age. This raises questions of integrity for contemporary Catholic universities in a dual sense. Have they gone so far in the direction of utilitarianism and specialization that they have sacrificed the integrity of the education they provide by abandoning a coherent vision of the whole picture of reality? Secondly, have they sacrificed their integrity by failing to live up to their own founding traditions and publicly stated principles? The effort to address these questions will hopefully lead to new ideas for the renewal of genuine Catholic higher education in the 21st century that will reorient the contemporary Catholic university to Newman’s ideal.

Room C
Dr. Bud Marr, The Economy of Salvation according to John Henry Newman: Theosis as a Via Media between Sola Fide and Pelagianism

As a Victorian-era theologian who journeyed from the Church of England into the Roman Catholic Communion, it’s not surprising that John Henry Newman wrote a significant amount about the doctrines of justification and sanctification. Already as an Anglican, Newman was critical of the Lutheran notion that a Christian is at the same time both righteous and a sinner (simul justus et peccator). In Newman’s view, God does not simply declare sinners innocent but truly sanctifies us, conforming us to the image of His Son. However, Newman also recognized that, if not properly understood, the conviction that we are called to become holy could easily slip into pelagianism, thus obscuring the orthodox affirmation that we are saved by grace alone. So as to safeguard against a pelagian understanding of the process of sanctification, Newman recovered and elaborated upon the patristic idea of theosis. We are made truly holy but not by our own efforts; rather, through the sacramental economy, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us such that we are healed from the wound of sin and made to be partakers of the Divine nature (cf. 2 Peter 1:4). This ancient way for thinking about salvation effectively cuts a via media between the Lutheran doctrine of salvation by faith alone and the equally erroneous idea that we are justified by virtue of our own human effort.

2:30-3:20 – Session #6 A, B, C

Room A

Mary Jo Dorsey, PhD, Unlikely Contemporaries: St. John Henry Newman and Emily Dickinson and their Poetic Imagery of mortality and immortality

A review of the literature reveals, surprisingly, no comparison or cross-reference to the lives and writings of John Henry Newman (1801 - 1890) and Emily Dickinson (1830 - 1886). While Newman was a wildly popular British figure during his lifetime, the American Dickinson only came to attention years after her death. Both had early Calvinist upbringings, and while Newman moved ultimately to Catholicism, Dickinson did not ascribe publicly to any religion. There are parallelisms, however, in their nineteenth century writings on mortality and immortality. This paper looks at the seemingly incomparable poetry of Newman and Dickinson and sets a tone for discussion on their poetic imagery of death and the musings of beyond. Finally, it asks the question of why these two contemporaries have yet to be analyzed together.

Room B

Dr. Brett Beasley, Recovering Newman’s Epistemology for a Post-Truth Era

Are we living in a post-truth era? Much of the American public seems to think so. Yet, despite the increasingly widespread use of terms like “fake news” and “post-truth,” there is little agreement about the causes and consequences of the phenomenon they attempt to describe. To employ a medical metaphor, many people join together in acknowledging the symptoms of a post-truth era, but they have fallen short of selecting an agreed-upon diagnosis or course of treatment. In this paper, I draw upon the thought of St. John Henry Newman, especially his Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent to diagnose and prescribe a series of treatments for our post-truth era. I show that the phenomena we now call “post-truth” were already emerging in Newman’s time. And I show how his thought coheres with and helps advance contemporary psychological accounts of how and why the fake news exploits features of our typical processes for judging truth. I argue that by recovering and re-applying
Newman’s epistemology, we can find ways to cope with and flourish in our polluted information ecosystem. This essay builds on my other recent attempts to introduce Newman’s thought to a popular audience to address contemporary concerns.

Room C

Peter Jeffery, The Dream of Gerontius and the Commendatio Animae

The Dream of Gerontius (1865) is Newman’s longest poem, an epic narrative of the human soul’s journey through natural death, the Particular Judgment, and finally to Purgatory with its assurance of eventual salvation and eternal life. Today it is best known through the musical setting by Edward Elgar (1900). Newman’s obvious purpose was to present a positive account of Catholic teaching on what happens after death—at a time when many Catholics thought of Purgatory as a temporary Hell, and most Protestants rejected the doctrine altogether as unscriptural. But critics have struggled to identify Newman’s literary sources: writings by Dante, St. Peter Damien, St. Catherine of Genoa and lesser figures have been proposed. However, a much more significant source has been overlooked: the rite of commending a dying soul, as printed in the Rituale Romanum in Newman’s time. This sequence of litanies, prayers, and readings was to be said at a person’s deathbed, after he/she has received the sacrament of Extreme Unction, during the final agony and at the moment of death. Close comparison shows that the Commendatio provides not only the sequence of events in Gerontius, but also enables us to identify the angelic and demonic characters the soul encounters along the way.

3:30-4:20 – Session #7 A, B, C

Room A


While she identifies significant ways in which Hopkins and Newman were inheritors the “humanist anxiety” of their Victorian age, Ann Sulloway and others miss the most brilliant aspect of their epistemic, metaphysical, and poetic work: its unique escape from both the taint of Hegelian idealism and the empiricist Positivism burgeoning around them. Both men found the inspiration for their original yet deeply traditional escape in Scotus—Newman through Butler and Hopkins through Newman, at least originally. That is, the Scotist development of Thomistic scholasticism provided pursuit of truth through “analogical knowledge” governed by the transcendentalis that allowed both Victorians to see how natural, human, and Divine agency and ends could be layered and Catholic Sacramentality. This piece is meant to be a humble response to what Edward Ondrako articulates as “timely invitation to study Scotus’s thought and to apply it in an authentic manner” (31).

Room B

Dr. Bernadette Waterman-Ward, A Word in Season

"Newman's brief poem "A Word in Season" confronts the quandary of a Christian charged with preaching the Gospel when aware of his own sin. Newman wrote it when confronting an ecclesiastical hierarchy that seemed to be betraying the faith for worldly reasons. At first the speaker in the poem despairs as he misinterprets the role of St. Paul when facing idolatry in Athens. However, in the end is given a solution in accord with the actual practice of both St. Paul and St. John Henry Newman."
As an Anglican and leading member of the Oxford Movement, Newman and the Tractarians saw in Sacred Scripture an archetype for poetry and poetic expression. Their understanding of the nature of poetry informed their approach to reading and interpreting the Bible. In his lecture on literature in *The Idea of a University* Newman argued against a view that contrasted ‘secular’ literature to the writings contained in Sacred Scripture. In this paper I will identify commonalities between Newman’s Tractarian comments describing the poetic nature of the Bible and his description in *The Idea of a University* of the Bible as a work of literature.