



# The Lion

A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's Church, Basford

[www.stmarksbasford.co.uk](http://www.stmarksbasford.co.uk)

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For many of you the subject of John Henry Newman's canonization on 13th October was a mere curiosity, for others a focus point of devotion. Many colleagues of mine in the Church made the effort of travelling to Vatican City for the ceremony itself; such was the anticipation for a native of this land attaining sainthood, the last being in the 17th century.

No matter how you received the news of John Henry Newman's canonization it does offer us a moment to pause and reflect upon a life that was lived in its totality for God. We are equally enthralled and intimidated by the saints; seeing near superfluous piety but feeling somehow inadequate and unable to meet such high standards. However, in my brief engagement with Newman's life and times I find that the sense of personal inadequacy is assuaged by an authentic sense of Newman's compassion and love for his brothers and sisters.

This was something one began to appreciate when an open invitation was given to attend vespers, evensong to you and me. This was offered by Fr. Dominic at St. Wulstan's RC Church in Wolstanton. Throughout the service Newman's poetry and hymns were utilized allowing one to contemplate the words of this man in a setting that was propitious. Amongst the many hymns and words of the service this reflection, penned by Newman and read in the service by our very own Fr. Terry, was most poignant: (Please find supplementary "God calls us again and again" poem). At this point it might be worthwhile to read the poem and we shall pick up in the next paragraph for minor of analysis.

Following the service a number of us went to the Archer for a de-brief, the Archer being the local pub in the area. Reflecting on the passage, I shared with Fr. Terry and others that I wasn't quite sure what Newman was trying to convey in this excerpt from his 'Parochial and plain sermons'. On one level we can get a handle on it; the repetition and clarity of language reveal that it is a poem elucidating upon Gods continuous call to us, something that would have proven compatible with the theme of our last Deanery Synod meeting here on 22/10/19, as we thought about our direction of travel under Bishop Michael under the banner of Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism.

Fr. Brian of Holy Trinity, Sneyd was quick to point out that it could be commenting upon something deeper and more historically prescient than a praising of God's call to vocation. As many of you know, Newman was an Anglican cleric working and writing for many years before his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith in 1847. Within the Anglican Church at the time of his ministry there were two understandings of salvation competing for dominance- one catholic, one evangelical.

It is perhaps best to understand this issue by diving into Netflix and watching the film Fury. If any of you have watched Fury you will appreciate what a visceral and striking film it is. Filmed in the last days of World War 2 Brad Pitt and his tank commanders make their way through what is left of Germany whilst encountering fanatical but desperate resistance. As a consequence of the desperation they lose a crew member of the Tank early in the film only to be sent a new recruit immediately. When one of the veteran members of the tank crew, played by Shia Le Bouf, is a devout man that immediately accosts the new recruit and asks him "Are you saved?" If you have never been faced with this question you will not be able to sympathize with the characters predicament as he is unable to answer. I was asked this when I first joined Nottingham University and had my first Theology lecture. It is a question that is in reality asking another question. Should you reply 'Yes, I am saved' then you have confidence in your own salvation and express an evangelical assurance. Should your reply be 'I don't know' you are closer to a catholic understanding. Perhaps this poem was an attempt by an Anglican to reconcile two understandings of salvation in the Church of England that perhaps he found ultimately mutually exclusive as his conversion to Roman Catholicism suggests.

St. Augustine who had an immense impact on catholic understanding wrote that salvation was a process of being made righteous or *justum facere*. With the definition of "justification" being understood as a process ("to make righteous"), subsequent Latin-based theology slowly developed the relationship between justification and the Church's sacraments in such a way that the Church mediated the process of justification through the sacramental system. Being saved was therefore

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something that took time, something that you had to do, namely participate in the life of the Church. That gradual turning to God or of God turning to you is something that many of us can relate to.

In contrast to the Catholic system, the fundamental, overarching concept to be grasped in understanding the Protestant system of salvation is that God imputes Christ's righteousness to the sinner by faith the moment one repents of one's sins and places one's faith in Christ. If this is all that is required then one is able to give the day, hour and minute that they were saved as it was the day they said yes to Jesus.

Whilst this of course is a very superficial characterization of these two deeply respected traditions it does offer us a platform from which we can grapple with them. The repetition of the 'again and again' in the poem certainly bolsters the catholic position which we know he was disposed to. Yet we know that to reference the call of Abraham, Peter and Matthew is to bring into play that very powerful idea of salvation occurring at the moment they said yes to Jesus and committed themselves to Him.

Whilst I am no expert in the teachings and life of St. John Henry Newman I think we can all stop to reflect on this poem and the many others penned by him. We know that the Anglican Church is a broad Church and therefore makes space for conflicting understandings. Whilst some of us can abide with this plurality, we acknowledge and revere those like Cardinal Newman who in good conscience simply could not. Whilst Newman was unable to reconcile these understandings in his own life we bow to an intellect that took them seriously nonetheless.

God Bless

*Patrick*

### Worship Services during November

<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>All Saints</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>8.00am</i>	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Holy Communion (BCP)</i>
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Remembrance</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Family Worship with Baptism</b>
		<b>16.30pm</b>	<b>Memorial Service</b>
<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>8.00am</i>	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Holy Communion (BCP)</i>
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Second &lt; Advent</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>8.00am</i>	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Holy Communion (BCP)</i>
<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christ the King</b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>8.00am</i>	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
		<i>10.30am</i>	<i>Holy Communion (BCP)</i>

### Soup and Bingo

Back by popular demand on **9th November at 1pm** our 'Soup and Bingo'. Come and join us for only £4.50 with the first game free.

### Diary Dates for November

6 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle
9 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	09.00am	Prayer Breakfast
12 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
12 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	19.00pm	PCC meeting
13 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	House group
16 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	09.30am	Manchester coach trip
19 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
21 <sup>st</sup>	Thursday	19.30pm	Contemplative prayer
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Saturday	13.00pm	Christmas Fayre
26 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
24 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday	16.00pm	Bishop Geoff's Farewell
27 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Baptism Prep

### Early December Dates

4 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	19.30pm	Reading Circle
7 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	16.30pm	Christmas meal
9 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	10.00am	Advent Quiet day
10 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	19.30pm	Living Faith
14 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	09.00am	Prayer breakfast

### Operation Christmas Child

Shoe boxes are once again available at the back of church for collection Please can you return them by **17th November** (Please note that toothpaste and sweets are no longer allowed).



### Prayer Breakfast

Come and join us at Beechwood Shire Living (ST5 0RJ) on **9th November and 14th December at 9.00am** for a fabulous time of fellowship over breakfast, followed by a short time of prayer and reflection. For more information and to pre order your breakfast please see Julie.

### Manchester Christmas Market

Get into the Festive Spirit with our coach trip to Manchester's Christmas Market on **Saturday 16th November, Seats £13 each**. We leave at 9.30am returning around 6:00pm. Please see the sign up sheet at the back of church.

### Christmas Fayre

It's already time to turn our attention to the Christmas Fayre on **23rd November from 1- 4pm**. The following items can be brought into church anytime now; they'll be used for our fund-raising... Toiletries, Christmas decorations, clean toys and games, bottles of alcohol, Jewellery and any new unwanted items which might make gifts.

### The Annual Advent Quiet Day

This is organised by the Community of Saint Chad and is taking place at Shallowford House on **Monday 9th December**, from **10.00am - 4.00pm**, Cost: £15 with a soup lunch. The speaker is the Revd Faith Claringbull, Volunteer Coordinator of Sanctus in Stoke. Bookings can be made through Helen Scheven (Helen.Scheven@lichfield.anglican.org)

### Bishop Geoff's farewell

We will be saying a fond farewell to Bishop Geoff during a special service at the Stoke Minster on **Sunday 24th November starting at 4.00pm**.