



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI  
TO THE PARTICIPANTS  
IN THE CARDINAL NEWMAN ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM**

*Monday, 7 April 1975*

*Dear Friends,*

It is with special joy that we have acceded to your wish to be received by us in audience during the Cardinal Newman Academic Symposium now taking place here in Rome and of which you are the expert participants. We greet you cordially and extend to you a warm welcome.

Your Symposium, which is carrying on the tradition of the previous International Congresses held in Luxembourg, has been organized in Rome to coincide with the Holy Year. As students of the great Cardinal, you have come together to deepen your knowledge of Newman's life and thought, and to draw from his powerful example and teachings practical conclusions and responses to the many religious problems of the present day. The echo that your worthy initiative has had among the many admirers of Cardinal Newman throughout the world and the presence among you of many young people are unmistakable signs of the great attraction to Newman and of the relevance that he enjoys today - indeed today perhaps more than at any previous time. We offer a warm greeting to those among you who are members of the Anglican clergy and who by your participation in the Symposium emphasize the great ecumenical importance of the figure and work of Newman at the present time.

He who was convinced of being faithful throughout his life, with all his heart devoted to the light of truth, today becomes an ever brighter beacon for all who are seeking an informed orientation and sure guidance amid the uncertainties of the modern world - a world which he himself prophetically foresaw. Many of the problems which he treated with wisdom - although he himself was frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted in his own time - were the subjects of the discussion and study of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, as for example the question of ecumenism, the

relationship between Christianity and the world, the emphasis on the role of the laity in the Church and the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions. Not only this Council but also the present time can be considered in a special way as Newman's hour, in which, with confidence in divine providence, he placed his great hopes and expectations: "Perhaps my name is to be turned to account as a sanction and outset by which others who agree with me in opinion should write and publish instead of me, and thus begin the transmission of views in religious and intellectual matters congenial with my own, to the generation after me" (Cfr. W. WARD, *The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman*, London 1912, vol. 2, p. 202). And it is precisely the present moment that suggests, in a particularly pressing and persuasive way, the study and diffusion of Newman's thought.

This is not the time for a detailed description of the wide programme that the needs of the present moment place before you, the expert scholars and friends of Newman. The very theme of your Symposium, "Newman's Realisation of Christian Life", is related to the central purpose of the Council and of the Holy Year.

The "realisation" of the Christian ideal in Newman's sense is but another name for a continual effort for the renewal of personal and community life in the spirit of the Gospel and in accordance with the just demands of the present moment of history. "Realising" our Christian vocation means, in Newman's view, making the truths of our faith a living reality, full of practical consequences for daily life; it means becoming true followers of Christ. And, in the lofty and arduous task to which this Holy Year urgently calls us, the thought and example of John Henry Newman bring a precious light and a great incitement. May his prayer become ours too: "Enale me to believe as if I saw; let me have Thee always before me as if Thou wert always bodily and sensibly present. Let me ever hold communion with Thee, my hidden, but my living God" (*Meditations and Devotions*).

It is our hope that your Symposium on Newman's life and thought will bear abundant fruit and offer its own specific and valuable contribution to the Holy Year, for a profound renewal in the life of the Church. We accompany your work with our prayers, invoking upon you all light and strength from the Lord.