

# Campus ministry at Towson University among those planning parties to mark Cardinal Newman's canonization

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Blessed John Henry Newman dedicated much of his life to the combination of faith and intellect at universities.

So it is only fitting that college Catholic student centers, many named after the upcoming saint, and a Catholic university named after him, plan to celebrate his Oct. 13 canonization with everything from lectures to watch parties and even pilgrimages to Rome for the event.

Cardinal Newman, the British scholar, philosopher, writer and Anglican priest before he was received into the Catholic Church, emphasized that Catholic students who attend public universities must be given a place to gather to support and encourage one another in their faith. That's why his name is part of many Catholic student centers where Catholic college students meet for liturgies, prayer, service work, discussion groups, social events and often food.

The Catholic campus ministry at Towson University will celebrate the canonization with an Oct. 13 community festival outside the grounds of its Newman Center, 7909 York Road, Towson, MD 21204. The festival, which runs from noon to 7 p.m., is free and open to everyone. It will feature music, food, games and more.

Father Matthew Buening, Catholic chaplain at Towson, wrote his thesis on Blessed Newman and young adult ministry. He described Blessed Newman as a "personal hero" who thought deeply about the interplay between faith and reason.

"He's just an amazing role model," Father Buening said. "I think we are still starting to unpack some of the true meaning of what he was teaching about the development of doctrine and about the nature of faith, which is at such the core of what students

are wrestling with. How can we have certain faith in this uncertain world in which we live?"

The University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, which formed the first campus Newman Club in 1893, coincidentally celebrated the center's 125th anniversary the week before Cardinal Newman's canonization with an Oct. 4-5 conference.

The weekend featured a keynote address on "Why Newman Still Matters" by Jonathan Reyes, executive director of the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The weekend wrapped up with a special Mass Oct. 6 and a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Newman Center's new location on campus.

For the canonization itself, some students are planning to attend a watch party in Philadelphia.

And although not every campus ministry program is going as all out as Penn Catholic Newman Community, they still plan to celebrate the saint who held universities so close to his heart.

Cardinal Newman spent much of his life at Oxford University as both a student and a fellow. As an Anglican priest, he was the vicar at a university church. After he became Catholic, he founded the Oratory of St. Philip Neri in Birmingham, England and a Catholic university in Dublin. Many of his ideas on higher education are in his book "The Idea of a University" based on lectures he gave in the 1850s.

St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, often described as one of the largest Newman centers in the U.S., and one of the few also to include student housing, is planning a Mass and vigil followed by eucharistic adoration, a talk about Cardinal Newman's importance, a service project still in the works and a special dinner in the dormitory with napkin holders displaying quotes from Newman.

A Google search about Cardinal Newman quotes shows there are plenty to choose from including: "To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often" and "We can believe what we choose. We are answerable for what we choose to believe."

Although not many Catholic college students can swing a pilgrimage to Rome in the middle of the fall semester, one student who is going will also have a part to play in the weekend's ceremonies by reading a petition at a prayer vigil for Cardinal Newman in Rome the night before his canonization sponsored by the London Oratories, which includes the Oratory in Birmingham founded by Cardinal Newman.

Hailey Rose Thayer, a junior biology education major at the University of Evansville, Indiana, lectures at campus Masses organized by the diocese's Newman Center. She is attending the canonization with a group of local college students from the area, as a private trip, not a diocesan-sponsored event, and said it was an "exciting opportunity" to be a part of.

A handful of students from at least two universities and their chaplains also are planning to attend the canonization as part of a pilgrimage trip visiting other sites including students from St. John's Catholic Newman Center at the University of Illinois and students from the Catholic Student Center at Washington University in St. Louis.

Representatives from Newman University in Wichita, Kansas, the only U.S. university named after Cardinal Newman, also will be at the canonization.

Noreen Carrocci, the university president, will be in this group that also includes university board members. She went to Cardinal Newman's beatification in 2010 and "never thought I'd be alive, never mind president" for his canonization. Carrocci, who spoke with Catholic News Service Sept. 25, retires at the end of the year.

The university's campus ministries organization is planning food-centered events — a chili dinner and an ice cream celebration — in the days leading up to the canonization and a feast day Mass for Cardinal Newman Oct. 9.

They will host an outdoor eucharistic adoration that will lead into a very early morning watch party at 4 a.m. (CST) for the canonization followed later that evening by a Mass for St. John Henry Newman.

Interceding to the new saint will be an ongoing way to mark his canonization.

Father Gary Braun, director of the Catholic Student Center at Washington University in St. Louis, said in an email to CNS that it is “urgent that the Newman movement on campus be entrepreneurial” for today’s students.

“Even after 29 years here and a priest for 42 years, I feel like I am just beginning. I have few answers going forward about what will be most effective programming, preaching, ministry to them. I am listening a lot and praying to our newest saint, John Cardinal Newman.”

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*George P. Matysek Jr. contributed to this story.*

*Click below to listen to a radio interview with Father Matthew Buening about campus ministry at Towson University and his two encounters with St. John Paul II.*

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