

Rome, June 2015



Dear Newman Friends,

In 1865 – exactly 150 years ago – John Henry Newman wrote *The Dream of Gerontius*, which set to music by Edward Elgar has become famous throughout the world. This poem is fascinating in its description of the dying Gerontius' journey towards God's judgment and from thence to Purgatory. Fr. Thomas Norris, for many years Professor at St. Patrick's College in Maynooth and presently Spiritual Director at the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, recently gave a paper in which he outlined the content and the contemporary relevance of this poem. We are pleased to be able to forward this paper to you with this newsletter [Cardinal Newman's Dream of Gerontius as a Revelation of the Destiny of the Human Person](#).

As is well known, the Last Things are closely linked to the virtue of hope; a virtue which is particularly important at this time. It is no accident that the Holy Father Pope Francis has exhorted us: "Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope!" (*Evangelii gaudium*, n. 86). In truth many of our contemporaries now live as if they could remain forever on this earth and find paradise here, others however, immersed in so many problems and difficulties, risk losing their confidence and joy in life. As a fervent preacher, Newman sought to strengthen people's hope and build up their faith. In the attached article, you will find some of his thoughts about the role of hope in Christian life, which have lost none of their freshness or power to attract [The Virtue of Hope in Christian Life](#).

We are pleased to note the number of Newman Friends continues to rise across the globe. Many of the faithful or those searching for the truth visit the places associated with Newman's life in England – even our Centre at Littlemore, Oxford – asking the great convert and theologian to intercede for them.

[Make a short visit to Littlemore](#)

Numerous licentiate and doctoral students consult the library of our centre in Rome researching their dissertations. As you will observe from the up-dated bibliography on our website, there is a constant stream of new books, articles and other papers on the life, thought and spirituality of Newman being published.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the attached essays and that they will help to strengthen your joy in being a Christian. Certain of blessed John Henry Newman's intercession for the Church and for us all and praying for his canonization ([Prayer for Canonisation](#)), we remain

Yours sincerely in Christ,

*Fr. Hermann Geissler FSO*

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