

The Significance of St John Henry Newman for Catholic Theology

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Vatican City, October 12, 2019



The awaited and blessed hour of John Henry Newman's canonization has finally come. The course followed by this convert from Anglicanism represents a rich source of teachings for his British fellow citizens and especially for the Universal Church. On the occasion of Newman's beatification, his biographer Ian Ker observed that "*my reading and re-reading of his writings over the years has only deepened my conviction that John Henry Newman is to be numbered among the Doctors of the Church*".¹

The expert's appreciation of the illustrious English clergyman presumed a future declaration of sainthood by the Catholic Church and a new phase based on the appropriation of the significance of his life and thought. Without wishing to anticipate the Church's judgment on the value of his testimony and teachings, I would nevertheless like to evoke some of the major areas of his contribution to Catholic theology and its possible implications for the future of modern theology.

If we want to speak accurately of Newman's ideas, we must begin by stressing the importance of his life described as the journey of a believer who

¹ IAN KER, *John Henry Newman*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, 2009, p. 746.

encountered faith in adolescence, a decisive experience that triggered a searching process for Truth, with multiple existential and institutional developments. As surprising as it may seem, I consider Newman's first lesson to reside in his celibacy, in his having consecrated his life to God shortly after his first conversion, abiding in an intimate and personal choice. This echoes the Absolute experience of God while serving the purposes of a search mission that Providence had bestowed upon him for the benefit of his country and of the universal Church.²

All of this being a precondition to any other theological consideration, I now evoke the hypothesis of a doctorate because of three specific areas that Newman developed extensively and rigorously, drawing from his theological, literary and historical training. His work is filled with circumstantial writings that punctuate his journey and justify passages and periods; these are detailed considerations that give his preaching, letters and treatises a clearly apologetic character, but also a novel pastoral dimension when compared to his contemporaries. Newman writes to give a rational account of his faith, to explain his faith decisions, but above all to stay faithful to the tribunal of his conscience in the presence of God. The latter will never allow him to forget his primordial relationship with Him, assumed once and for all and nurtured through a vital and prayerful dialogue: "*The inward conversion of which I was conscious (...) had some influence on my opinions (...) in making me rest in the thought of two and two only supreme and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator*".³

In what way does Newman confront the Catholic theology of his time and of all eras, if we want to consider seriously the possibility of his candidacy as a Doctor of the Church? It seems to me that the English master ranks among such Doctors of the Faith as Athanasius and Augustine, whose lives were confessions of faith at the cost of great sacrifice, and who provided decisive insights on either its content or its act. Now Newman excels in exploring both

² Cf. John Henry Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua*, Longmans, Green and Co., London 1890, 395 pp.: "*I am obliged to mention, though I do it with great reluctance another deep imagination, which at this time, the autumn of 1816, took possession of me (...), viz. that it was the will of God that I should lead a single life. This anticipation (...) was more or less connected, in my mind, with the notion that my calling in life would require such a sacrifice as celibacy involved; as, for instance, missionary work among the heathen, to which I had a great drawing for some years. It also strengthened my feeling of separation from the visible world, of which I have spoken above*". (p. 7); JEAN HONORÉ, *Itinéraire spirituel de Newman*, Paris, éd. du Seuil, 1963, p. 40: "*The call to celibacy was not born of an anxious or timid conscience (...). But it derives from a much broader and soothing feeling: that of a vocation that is both a renunciation and a commitment. (...) Sacrifice seems to him to be the pledge of goods that are better and more durable than those of the sensitive world; moreover, it seems to announce the exact path for a promising destiny. Thus the call to celibacy coincides with the premonition of a mission which is burgeoning in Newman*".

³ *Apologia*, p. 4.

fides quae and *fides qua*, but his most original and innovative contribution consists mostly in his describing faith as a personal encounter, as an emotional but also as a rational adherence which involves a unique certainty as well as a non-delegable responsibility that imposes a conscious commitment to vital and sometimes dramatic decisions: "*When we pray, we pray, not to an assemblage of notions, or to a creed, but to One Individual Being; and when we speak of Him we speak of a Person, not of a Law or a Manifestation*".⁴ The stance of 19th century Catholic theology tended to a noetic dimension of faith at the expense of an emotional and personal dimension, often reducing faith to an intellectual acceptance of abstract proposals. Argumentation suffered a struggle with rationalism, and as a consequence tended to impoverish the vital and nourishing dimension of faith that precedes and sustains all knowledge, and which cannot be reduced to clear and distinct ideas.⁵

This tendency did not completely disappear, even today, when the emphasis on knowledge of faith often overrides the relational dimension of faith. One just has to look at the Catechism of the Catholic Church to see this.⁶ As for academic theology, it is still far from a Trinitarian deepening of the faith that would highlight the priority of the person over conceptual elements, which are certainly valid and indispensable, but secondary to the personal adherence to the Three Persons, rooted in the Holy Spirit.⁷ Newman broadens the understanding of the experience of faith by illustrating all the personal aspects, from the strong but indefinable impression of dogma in the soul,⁸ from the awakening of intelligence and imagination, to the mobilization of the volitional and

⁴ «The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrines» in *Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford*, London, Oxford and Cambridge, Rivington, 1872, XV, §21, p. 330 *Abstract University Sermons*.

⁵ Cf. *An essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, with an introduction by Etienne Gilson, New York, Doubleday & Company, 1955, chap. 10, «Inference and Assent in the Matter of Religion», §3: «*If I am asked to use Paley's argument for my own conversion, I say plainly I do not want to be converted by a smart syllogism; if I am asked to convert others by it, I say plainly I do not care to overcome their reason without touching their hearts. I wish to deal, not with controversialists, but with inquirers*» (p. 330).

⁶ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n°150, where it is stated that "*faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed.*" The reference to the "personal" appears only once, whereas all developments in chapter three concern the "knowledge of faith" and the interplay of mental faculties in the act of faith, but there is almost nothing on a relational dimension.

⁷ The personal relationship with the Divine Persons is rooted in the structure of Christian initiation which establishes the grace of divine sonship in baptism, the gift of the Holy Spirit in confirmation and the offering of the self to the Father with Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist. This Trinitarian sequence culminating in Eucharistic communion is often absent or reversed in catechesis, which weakens the sense of belonging to the liturgical assembly.

⁸ *Apologia*, p. 49: "*I have changed in many things: in this I have not. From the age of fifteen, dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion: I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery. As well can there be filial love without the fact of a father, as devotion without the fact of a Supreme Being. What I held in 1816, I held in 1833, and I hold in 1864. Please God, I shall hold it to the end*".

affective powers that shape a unique encounter, relationship and communion: *"The true spirit of faith leads a man to look off from self to God, to think nothing of his own wishes, his present habits, his importance or dignity, his rights, his opinions, but to say, "I put myself into Thy hands, O Lord; make Thou me what Thou wilt; I forget myself; I divorce myself from myself; I am dead to myself; I will follow Thee".*⁹ In all the many aspects barely mentioned here, Newman introduces a host of insights and reflections that highlight the primordial personal quality of faith as assent, an eminently subjective and a totalizing synthetic act leading to the strongest conviction, even if it escapes the criteria of exact sciences or humanities.¹⁰ In this regard, he elaborates a severe criticism of scientism, and he develops great technical concepts set at the border of the psychological and the spiritual, seizing the concrete man in his personal deliberations, dissecting the meanders of his dispositions, motivations and conditionings that belong to life and to the concrete existence in faith.¹¹

Having established the personal and existential dimension of the act of faith and its intellectual and volitional dynamism, Newman extends his analysis, beyond the individual level into the social domain where he seeks to rationally account for the existence of ordinary believers, especially those who have no theological knowledge and cannot explain their own beliefs, but who are nevertheless animated by a reasonable conviction that guides their lives.¹² Here comes an entire field that "the Apologist of his own life" for his

⁹ Cf. «The Testimony of Conscience» in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, V, 17, Longmans, Green and Co., 1907, p.242; Cf. J. HONORÉ, *La pensée de John Henry Newman - Une introduction*, Genève, Ad Solem, 2010, «Le théologien de la foi» (pp. 93-110).

¹⁰ Cf. «Love the Safeguard of Faith Against Superstition» in *University Sermons*, XII, §26: «*Right Faith is the faith of a right mind. Faith is an intellectual act; right Faith is an intellectual act, done in a certain moral disposition. Faith is an act of Reason, viz. a reasoning upon presumptions; right Faith is a reasoning upon holy, devout and enlightened presumptions*» (p. 239).

¹¹ These developments appear in his *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, as well as in his *University Sermons*, and are systematically quoted in his great work: *Grammar of Assent*. For example, cf. «Faith and Reason, Contrasted as Habits of Mind», in *University Sermons...*, X, §43: «*For is not this the error, the common and fatal error, of the world, to think itself a judge of Religious Truth without a preparation of heart? "I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine." "He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice." "The pure in heart shall see God:" "to the meek mysteries are revealed;" "he that is spiritual judgeth all things." "The darkness comprehendeth it not." Gross eyes see not; heavy ears hear not. But in the schools of the world the ways toward Truth are considered high roads open to all men, however disposed, at all times. Truth is to be approached without homage. Every one is considered on a level with his neighbour; or rather the powers of the intellect, acuteness, sagacity, subtlety, and depth, are thought the guides into Truth. Men consider that they have as full a right to discuss religious subjects, as if they were themselves religious. They will enter upon the most sacred points of Faith at the moment, at their pleasure, – if it so happen, in a careless frame of mind, in their hours of recreation, over the wine cup*» (pp. 198-199).

¹² Cf. «The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine», loc. cit., XV, §11: «*Now, here I observe, first of all, that, naturally as the inward idea of divine truth, such as has been described, passes into explicit form by the activity of our reflective powers, still such an actual delineation is not essential to its genuineness and perfection. A peasant may have such a true impression, yet be unable to give any intelligible account of it, as will easily be understood*» (pp. 320-321).

contemporaries, approaches as a broader rational exercise in order to counter the progressive invasion of scientism, liberalism and fideism.¹³ Aware of the progressive decline of Belief imposed by a scientific mentality that relegates faith to the realm of the irrational or private,¹⁴ Newman leads a battle of great epistemological and anthropological significance, since it is man himself who is threatened and diminished by the practical atheism resulting from scientism.

In addition to exploring the laws of the existential logic of faith and to defending its rationality, Newman spends a long time studying the development of Christian doctrine, which consists in the third area of meriting consideration to becoming a Doctor of the Church. From his acquaintance with the Fathers of the Church, especially Athanasius, he discovered that, in order to keep its integrality, the faith of the Church must adapt its language to the cultural challenges and the dangers of heresy. It must therefore discern doctrines compatible with the deposit of faith, eventually adopting a new language, not necessarily scriptural, while remaining faithful to the revelation established once and for all by the determination of the canon of the New Testament Scriptures. Thus, although the deposit does not change, the Church's knowledge of it progresses, deepens and is expressed in a new way, always faithful to the original idea.¹⁵ In his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Newman passionately analyses the criteria and conditions for ensuring a doctrinal fidelity not only compatible but also in harmony with the new dogmas of the Roman Church since they express the Church's progressive

¹³ Apologia, p. 288 (Note A on liberalism): "Liberty of thought is in itself a good; but it gives an opening to false liberty. Now by Liberalism I mean false liberty of thought, or the exercise of thought upon matters, in which, from the constitution of the human mind, thought cannot be brought to any successful issue, and therefore is out of place. Among such matters are first principles of whatever kind; and of these the most sacred and momentous are especially to be reckoned the truths of Revelation. Liberalism then is the mistake of subjecting to human judgment those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent of it, and of claiming to determine on intrinsic grounds the truth and value of propositions which rest for their reception simply on the external authority of the Divine Word".

¹⁴ Cf. «Biglietto Speech», in *Addresses to Cardinal Newman with His Replies*, Longmans, Green and Co., 1905, p. 64-65: «For thirty, forty, fifty years I have resisted to the best of my powers the spirit of liberalism in religion. (...) It is an error overspreading, as a snare, the whole earth. (...) Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching which is gaining substance and force daily. It is inconsistent with any recognition of any religion, as true. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, for all are matters of opinion. Revealed religion is not a truth, but a sentiment and a taste; not an objective fact, not miraculous; and it is the right of each individual to make it say just what strikes his fancy. (...) Since, then, religion is so personal a peculiarity and so private a possession, we must of necessity ignore it in the intercourse of man with man. If a man puts on a new religion every morning, what is that to you? (...) Religion is in no sense the bond of society».

¹⁵ Cf. «The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine», loc. cit., XV, §20: «The mind which is habituated to the thought of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, naturally turns (...) with a devout curiosity to the contemplation of the Object of its adoration, and begins to form statements concerning Him before it knows whither, or how far, it will be carried. One proposition necessarily leads to another, and a second to a third; then some limitation is required; and the combination of these opposites occasions some fresh evolutions from the original idea, which indeed can never be said to be entirely exhausted» (p. 329).

knowledge of the deposit of the faith. This observation deeply shook Newman to the core, causing his criticism of the Roman Church to fall, formally accused of contaminating the deposit with unjustifiable additions.¹⁶

In this chapter of doctrinal development, Newman laid the foundations for a theology of Tradition according to a broader and more inclusive vital logic, which reveals the richness of his ecclesiology. While post-Tridentine theology identifies the Church with its hierarchy, in accordance with St. Paul, Newman perceives the Church as the Body of Christ of which we are members¹⁷: *“Thus the heart of every Christian ought to represent in miniature the Catholic Church, since one Spirit makes both the whole Church and every member of it to be His Temple”*.¹⁸ The dominant conception of Tradition was limited at the time to the faithful transmission of doctrines by the Magisterium, while exaggerating the autonomy of this regulatory body with regard to the Holy Scriptures. Newman, on the other hand, always takes his starting point in Scripture, which he interprets in an ecclesial way in the spirit of the Fathers, which induces him to become aware of the problem posed by the principle of individual interpretation, and thus the inconsistency of Protestantism. Gradually, as his discoveries challenged his intellectual bases, his search for truth led by a conscience free of prejudice brought him to identify the place that guarantees the integrity of the deposit of faith, the authentic way of interpreting it, as well as the legitimacy and necessity of doctrinal developments. This was enough to convince a believer of this caliber, inhabited by an exceptional intelligence and governed by a righteous conscience, to advance a request for joining the Catholic Church. But such a perilous leap was not the result of a syllogism, for the English master had recognized that the Church is essentially not a magisterial authority, but a living body walking in history, the Body of

¹⁶ Cf. *Apologia pro vita sua*, part III and part IV.

¹⁷ Cf. «The Communion of Saints», in *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Longmans, Green and Co, 1909, IV, 11: «*He [Christ] formed His Apostles into a visible society; but when He came again in the Person of His Spirit, He made them all in a real sense one, not in name only. (...) Their separate persons were taken into a mysterious union with things unseen, were grafted upon and assimilated to the spiritual body of Christ, which is One, even by the Holy Ghost, in whom Christ has come again to us. Thus Christ came, not to make us one, but to die for us: the Spirit came to make us one in Him who had died and was alive, that is, to form the Church. (...) Such is the Christian Church, a living body, and one; not a mere framework artificially arranged to look like one. Its being alive is what makes it one (...). The Living Spirit of God came down upon it at Pentecost, and made it one, by giving it life*» (pp. 169-171).

¹⁸ «Connection Between Personal and Public Improvement», in *Sermons Bearing on Subjects of the Day*, X, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1909, p. 132.

Christ animated by the Holy Spirit, an ecclesiological conviction that anticipated by at least a century the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council.¹⁹

What does Newman's contribution mean today at the existential level of faith, at the historical level of doctrinal development, and at the mystical level of ecclesiology for the future of Catholic theology?

This great witness of the Christian faith says to Catholic theology that, first of all, faith must never be taken for granted and cannot be reduced to formulas. Since it is part of a living and changing relationship in the continuity of a person, it lives as a growing organism within an ecclesial community and a living tradition. The definite adherence that faith requires is total and a source of peace as well, because it moves beyond the "notional" adherence to truths towards the "real" acceptance of God by the whole person, even when questions and perplexities remain. However, "*ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt*",²⁰ and theology must help reveal the rationality of faith, while steering it away from the control of scientific reason that admits only its own canons and criteria. The appropriation of Newman's testimony has only just finally begun, and it must enter a new phase of systematic study, integration and universal projection towards a broader theological dialogue with the whole of Christianity.

Newman did not classify himself as a "theologian",²¹ especially according to the arid encyclopedic model of his time, but he was more of a theologian than all his contemporaries were, because he thought with God and through his own personal being, witness of a living communion able to re-think from scratch vital issues that can never be reduced to formulas. He taught, and

¹⁹ Cf. I. KER, "John Henry Newman on Vatican II", in Patrizia Manganaro and Michele Marchetto (edd), *Maestri perché testimoni – Pensare il futuro con John Henry Newman e Edith Stein*, Acts of the International Conference, Rome, Lateran University Press, 2017, pp. 83-111.

²⁰ *Apologia*, p. 239.

²¹ Cf. KEITH BEAUMONT, "Newman, maître spirituel dans la tradition de l'Église, *Études Newmaniennes*, vol. 33 (2017): "Newman has always denied to be a "theologian". Why this refusal? Three explanations can be advanced: 1° He probably meant that he had never received a formal theological training, which is perfectly correct. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge at the time were the main training centers for the Anglican clergy. And the curriculum to become a pastor or minister of this Church consisted mainly in the study of classical literature, at times of mathematics, and of how to become a gentleman. In addition, there were some classes on the Bible and - perhaps - some optional theology classes! (...) 2° Secondly, his refusal to be considered as a "theologian" was also, undoubtedly, a self-defense strategy for Newman. He often suffered because of his theological ideas, notably at the time of the publication of the *Essay on Development* in 1845 and especially in 1859 with the *Rambler* affair. His refusal to be considered a theologian was therefore a way of saying: leave me alone! 3° Finally - and this is the most important point here - his refusal of the word theologian bears almost certainly a third meaning. Catholic Newman meant that he was not a "theologian" in the same way as were the theologians of his time, whose theology was purely conceptual or - in Newmanian terms - purely "notional": it was indeed divorced from history, divorced from the study of the Scriptures, and also divorced from spiritual life» (pp. 13-14).

he teaches more than ever before by the example of his life, because true masters are essentially witnesses,²² as St. Paul VI said and repeated so well.

It pains me to say nothing about his anthropology, so existential in quality, of his vision of the laity and charisms, which here again anticipated Vatican II, of his ideas on human and Christian education, on his Marian spirituality or his preaching, not to mention his trials, many of which took place before his conversion, and proved to be even more so as Catholic, to the extent that there was mention of the martyrdom of Newman.²³

But if John Henry Newman's canonization brings us an unspeakable joy, filling us with gratitude towards God, it would be totally anachronistic to fall into triumphalisms of any kind. The depth of this man of God and the place he now occupies in Catholicity, make us aware of the void his absence would have left if he had not been and, consequently, of the theological need for a new ecumenical impetus towards reconciliation and the reconstitution of dislocated elements of Catholic unity. This lack of unity affects the communion of individuals and churches but it points also to a lack of integration of the doctrinal and spiritual riches that adorn the sister Churches and ecclesial communities still separated from Rome. Newman's contribution, which offers the typical qualities of English culture and Anglican tradition, brings about an assessment of what was lost to centuries of separation, polemics and narrowing perspectives, in an attempt to defend confessional identities.

The time has thus come to encourage and multiply initiatives, despite the difficulties along the way, for dialogue and reconciliation in order to accomplish full unity among Christians. It is not a question of using Newman's figure to depict the return to the fold. Rather, his life and his theology challenge us to carefully examine the internal difficulties of reconciliation and to take a greater interest in other Christians in order to move together towards a more perfect attainment of the *Catholica*. This requires a conversion from all confessions, starting from the Roman Church, which must be open to eventual transformations that can clear the path towards unity, so desired by the Lord. On the theological level, what benefit would we not draw from intensifying our exchanges with Slavic, Indian, African traditions, as well as from all the nuances offered by the bilateral dialogues that have been established since the Second Vatican Council? It is enough to mention just a few names among many others (Wladimir Soloviev, Pawel Florenski, Alexander Schmemmann, Jean

²² Cf. P. MANGANARO and M. MARCHETTO (edd), *Maestri perché testimoni ...*, p. 9.

²³ DENYS GORCE, *Le martyre de Newman*, Paris, Alzatia, 1961.

Zizioulas, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, etc.), to realize that Catholic theology needs to open up, with the help of Newman and his vision of doctrinal development, to a pneumatological and Trinitarian enrichment.

The Catholic Church cannot celebrate Newman's canonization without discerning in the event a "sign of the times" for theology, the *kairos* of his testimony of Truth, which requires a theological, and even philosophical, conversion in order to invigorate the dialogue between faith and culture. Saint Paul VI stressed with regret that the divorce between faith and culture marks one of the tragedies of our time, yet we have become indifferent to this divorce. And we note the collapse of the institution of the family, the crisis of education and that the young are being formed or de-formed online by Web "masters" that transmit superficial emotions and pleasures. The heritage of modern theology has achieved a separation of faith and reason in a way that challenges both faith and reason. Neither of them has yet really recovered from their divorce because their relationship has been reversed: reason has supplanted faith in culture, and faith has become defensive, resorting to fideism or getting bogged down in modernism. Newman was accused of both by his contemporaries who lacked the conceptual tools to fully appreciate the extension and the value of his position of equilibrium.

The concept of equilibrium, constantly built and maintained, was very much alive among the great Medieval Doctors, especially Saint Thomas, because Aquinas embedded the strong philosophical component of his work in Faith, in order to reflect the truths of the faith. The emancipation of modern reason and its claim to supplant Faith with a universal, consensual, and binding rationality has failed. The appalling avatars of modern atheism in the tragedies of the 20th century are there as evidence. Faith needs to save the concrete historical sense of the person and of societies who cannot survive without hope and love. Newman is a prophet of equilibrium, an equilibrium that needs to be found and perfected, a theory he developed from his intellectual Faith approach. He is therefore in a position to enlighten our contemporaries on the complex, but necessary and vital relationship between faith, which envelops reason and delimits its field of competence, and reason, which can neither claim to explain everything nor to store theology in the attic of the irrational. The balance of these relationships in Newman's work refers to the intellectual posture of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas, a posture that has unfortunately been lost with scholastic decadence, Lutheran reform and the epistemological shift into anthropocentric and anti-metaphysical modernity.

From a philosophical and theological perspective, Newman built a bridge towards the great witnesses of the Patristic and Medieval traditions. He thus effectively prepared the Second Vatican Council and the new emanating equilibrium, in concomitance with the renewal of the relationship between nature and grace, along the line of Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar.²⁴

Catholic theology has not yet taken full measure of the conciliar Pentecost, and has not sufficiently renewed its method in the light of the emergence of new charisms, especially with regards to the female half of humanity. These charisms come to the aid of theology by instilling the Holy Spirit which lends an increased spiritual note to the theological processes, in harmony with an interpretation of Sacred Scripture inspired by *Dei Verbum*, and which cannot be reduced to the methods of historical-critical exegesis. With Newman, theological reason emanates clearly from the Word of God and provides adequate rational tools to appreciate scientific truths, while integrating them according to their epistemological level into the broader but scientifically unobjectifiable horizon of faith.

Newman gave an important place to theology in the life of the Church. Indeed, theology is part of the prophetic ministry as the intelligence of the faith that nourishes contemplation, renews preaching, and provides the cultural tools for a positive, constructive and, primarily, an evangelizing dialogue with the world. He himself was a pioneer of an existential and historical theology with a strong pastoral dimension; he was just as much a "*prophet of ecumenism*"²⁵ before the word was ever used, both because of his passionate search for truth and because of the dialogues he kept with his contemporaries. They were apologetic in style and substance without being rationalistic because he based them on a personal and meditated adherence to the truth of God and to all it implies for an individual who is faithful to his conscience.

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²⁴ Cf. OLIVIER DE BERRANGER, *Par amour de l'invisible - Itinéraires croisés de John Henry Newman et Henri de Lubac*, Geneva, Ad Solem, 2010, chap. 6, "Newman théologien", pp. 77-85; "Conscience et dogme chrétien", pp. 133-143.

²⁵ Cf. J. HONORÉ, *La pensée de John Henry Newman: «In the perspective of the XIXth century, the work of Newman stands out as a first example of ecumenical theology. Not that he tried to establish the conditions and paths leading to the reconciliation of the Churches; but rather because he lays the ground for a reflection on man and God based on Revelation, in which all emanating confessions can recognize each other and meet»* (p. 152).