



# The Church and Sacraments

Influence of the Oxford Movement  
Old Fashioned Sunday School  
November 8, 2009

# The Church and Sacraments

- Incarnation has tended to value of the sacraments
- History has varied a great deal
- By the 19<sup>th</sup> century sacramental life in England was almost nonexistent
- Many would only receive holy communion once a year at Easter

# Oxford Movement 1833-1845

- Tractarians -- 90 Tracts published 1833-1841
- Evangelicals who were awakened to the Catholic Heritage of the Church
- Not primarily philosophical or doctrinal initially
- More heart than head
- Concerned with the law of prayer as it leads to belief

# Context

- Poetry as a vehicle of religious language
- Awe and mystery in religion, reverence, and growth of conscience is about holiness not duty
- A reaction against the Enlightenment
- Coincided with Romantic Movement –new interest in primitive and medieval Christianity

# Joseph Turner (1775-1851): The Slave Ship





# Features

- Hymnody vehicle to share religious feelings
- Sacraments as windows to the ever present God
- Recalling to a life of holiness through worship
- Revival of monastic orders and religious communities
- Scholarship was a big component, particularly history of the early church

# Causes

- Removal of religious test for state office and protection of dissenters
- Rejection of Erastianism which argued the state has the right to intrude upon the affairs of the church and overrule decisions.
- Reform Bill of 1832 and plan to suppress 10 Irish Bishoprics

# Identity Crisis

- “Anglicanism” is a 19<sup>th</sup> century coinage
- Concern with self-definition led to more defined parties within the C of E
- Differentiation came through traditions related to piety, and liturgical expression



# Tenets of the Oxford Movement

- Church of England as a Divine institution
- Church as the primordial sacrament of Christ
- Apostolic Succession—call to responsibility
- Doctrine of ‘reserve’ in relation to knowledge
- Mystery was inseparable from revelation

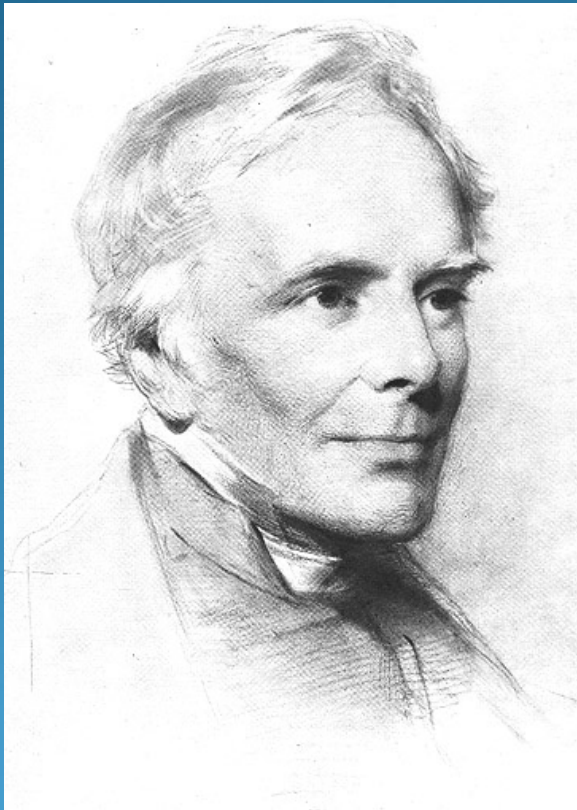
# Expressions

- Revival in Eucharistic devotion-real presence
- Sacramental Confession
- Adaptations of Roman books of devotion
- Sermon still principle vehicle
- Scripture contained what was necessary for salvation
- Not only a sacramental focus, many who followed the movement had a central concern for the poor and working classes welfare

# Major Voices of the Movement

- John Keble (1792-1866)
- John Henry Newman (1801-1890)
- Edward B Pusey(1800-1882)
- All had different influences on the movement

# John Keble (1792-1866)

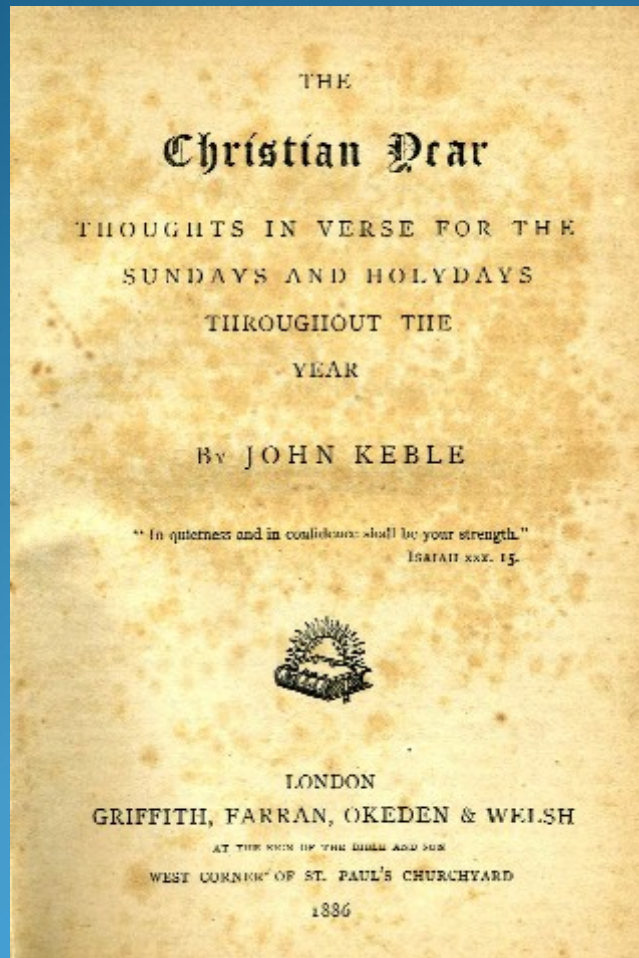


- Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1831 to 1841
- debt to Coleridge and Wordsworth
- Parish priest from 1836 until his death

# Keble

- Assize Sermon in 1833 considered to be the beginning of the movement
  - Denounced the view that the church was only a societal institution
  - Called to be the prophetic voice of God
- Formed the moral ideal of the movement more by his person than by his thought
- Movement of pastoral and moral care

# The Christian Year 1827



- Hugely popular poems
- Faith in the context of the Christian year
- Hymn writer
- Still two in our current hymnal

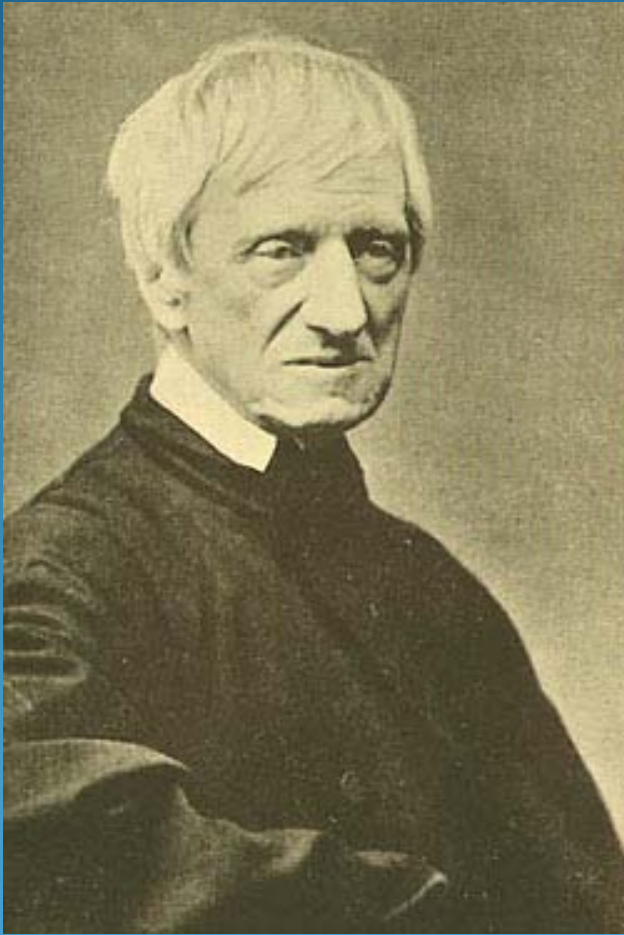


# Holy Communion (excerpt)

O God of Mercy, God of Might,  
How should pale sinners bear the sight,  
If, as Thy power in surely here,  
Thine open glory should appear?

For now Thy people are allowed  
To scale the mount and pierce the cloud,  
And Faith may feed her eager view  
With wonders Sinai never knew.

# John Henry Newman (1801-1890)



- Evangelical Upbringing
- 1828 Vicar of St. Mary's of Oxford
- Edited the entire series of the Oxford Tracts
- wrote 24 of them himself (including Tract Ninety, which brought the series to an abrupt end)

# Newman Continued

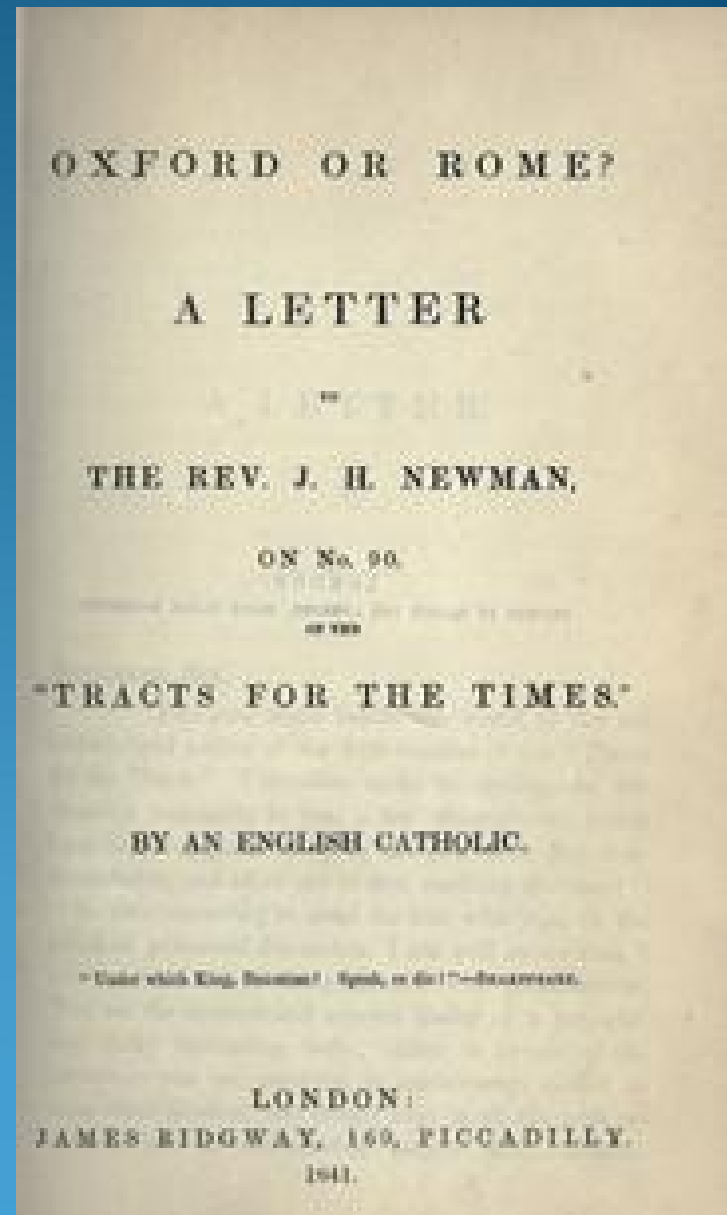
- Books more influential
- *Lectures On the Prophetical Office of the Church* (1837)
- *University Sermons* (1843)
- *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (1834-1842)
- Like Keble published about early church fathers including *Arians of the Fourth Century* (1833) and his translation, with notes and commentary, of *Selected Treatises of St. Athanasius*

# Newman Continued

- Reason cannot be the safeguard of faith because the deeper safeguard was dutifulness or love.
- Faith is a movement from something known to something unknown, kept in the narrow path of truth by the Law of dutifulness which inhabits it, the Lights of heaven which animates and guides it

# Tract 90 1841

- condemned by many bishops
- He retired.
- Left for Rome in 1845 and eventually became a cardinal
- “Poetry is the refuge of those who have not the Catholic Church to flee to an repose upon, for the Church herself is the most sacred and august of poets.”



# The Pillar- Newman

Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom,  
lead Thou me on!

The night is dark, and I am far from home;  
lead Thou me on!

Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

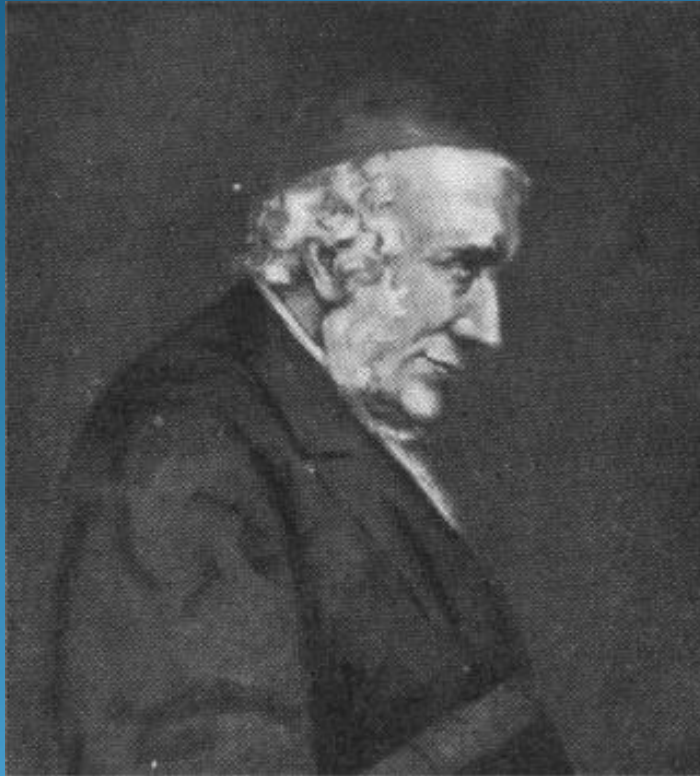
I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou  
shouldst lead me on;

I loved to choose and see my path; but now  
lead Thou me on!

I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!



# Edward B. Pusey (1800-1882)



- Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, and a canon of Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, from 1828 until his death.
- He wrote two Tracts
- Fasting and on Baptism
- His tracts were more scholarly in focus

# Pusey

- Sermon on the Eucharist got him suspended from university preaching for two years.
- In 1845 he helped to found a convent in London, the first Anglican convent since the 1500's.
- His best-known books defend the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the inerrancy of Scripture
- In the great cholera epidemic of 1866, he did outstanding work in caring for the sick.

# Conclusions

- Poet, Theologian, and Scholar as leading voices
- Poetry bridged the gap between strict Romanism and Reformed tradition
- Incarnational focus tended to preserve the importance of the sacraments
- Worship ultimately meant to increase the holiness of our lives
- Movement influenced much in the American Church that we take for granted