

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

July 15, 2009 at 1:05pm

Newman's beatification scheduled

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

Simon Caldwell of Catholic News Services is reporting that Cardinal John Henry Newman will be beatified in Birmingham, England, May 2. The date and venue have been proposed by the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes and are expected to be accepted soon by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the source told CNS July 15 on condition of anonymity.

The source said the cardinal will be beatified in the Birmingham Oratory, which he founded following his conversion to Catholicism in 1845 at age 44.

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tMay 2 is seen as a favorable date because it is the feast of St. Athanasius, the fourth-century "champion of orthodoxy" admired by Newman.

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tPope Benedict XVI signed the decree authorizing the beatification earlier this year after Vatican medical and theological experts approved the 2001 healing of Deacon John Sullivan of Marshfield, Mass., who was "bent double" by a severe spinal condition, as a miracle attributed to Cardinal Newman's intercession. The decree was made public by the Vatican July 3.

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tBeatification is a major step in the Catholic sainthood process.

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