

Reflection Wednesday Week 21 – Blessed Dominic Barberi 2020

Dominic Barberi was born near Viterbo, Italy, in 1792 and joined the Passionist Order. Responding to the call of God to work as a missionary in England, he was ordained in 1818 and worked in Italy and Belgium before coming to England in 1841. His first foundation was at Aston Hall in Staffordshire. He established four Passionist houses, and received many Anglicans into full communion, the most famous being Saint John Henry Newman, who was received at Littlemore, Oxford, on 9th October 1845. Blessed Dominic was noted for his personal warmth towards non-Catholics and for his zeal in preaching. He drew crowds despite his strong Italian accent and worked for a higher profile for the small Catholic community in England. He always wore his Passionist habit and, in 1844, organised a Corpus Christi procession through the local streets, which is believed to have been the first public procession of its kind in England in modern times. Blessed Dominic died in Reading on 27th August 1849 and was beatified by Pope Paul VI in 1963. As the psalmist says: *“Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!”* Certainly, Dominic Barberi was no hypocrite or whitewashed tomb. He was genuine through and through; filled with the love of God and the zeal of Jesus in bringing people to the truth and love of God. We owe him so much for bringing Saint John Henry Newman into the Church, because he has been an important inspiration and innovator for the Church.

John Henry Newman wrote: *“God has created all things for good; all things for their greatest good; everything for its own good. What is the good of one is not the good of another; what makes one person happy would make another unhappy. God has determined, unless I interfere with His plan, that I should reach that which will be my greatest happiness. He looks on me individually, He calls me by my name, He knows what I can do, what I can best be, what is my greatest happiness, and He means to give it me.”*

Father O'Reilly answers the phone. "Hello, is this Father O'Reilly?" "It is."

"This is the IRS. Can you help us?" "I can."

"Do you know a Ted Houlihan?" "I do"

"Is he a member of your congregation?" "He is"

"Did he donate £10,000 to the church?" **"He will!!"**

