

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Name announced for northern beaches Catholic college**

The new secondary college planned for the James Cook University campus at Smithfield now has a name – Newman Catholic College.

Cairns Bishop James Foley announced the name following community consultation and recommendations from the Catholic Northern Beaches Parish whose parishioners strongly endorsed the recognition of the recently canonised St John Henry Newman.

“Having spent considerable time with the writings of John Henry Newman, I was delighted with the local recommendation,” Bishop James said.

John Henry Newman was a 19th century English theologian and poet, who was first an Anglican priest and later a Catholic priest and cardinal. He was canonised by Pope Francis in October this year, the first English saint in 300 years.

“He had a long association with Oxford University as a scholar, teacher and priest, which became estranged in his conversion to the Catholic faith but later restored as the first honorary fellow of Trinity College,” he said.

Bishop James said one of John Henry Newman’s most influential works was ‘The Idea of a University’ which includes the passage ‘The university...educates the intellect to reason well in all matters, to reach out towards truth and to grasp it’.

A further aspect of this publication was the recognition of the need for a respectful relationship between university and the church and the belief that each should maintain an independent role.

“With such a scholarly and insightful background, we could not imagine a more appropriate name for a Catholic college set within a university campus,” he said.

Bishop James said he had also endorsed the parishioners’ recommendation for the college to adopt a Franciscan charism.



(Charism in a school setting is the way a school demonstrates its Gospel values as “the face of God to the world”. It determines the school’s identity and shapes the mission of the school community; its nature, its spirit, its goals and its particular character)

“The Franciscan charism is based on the spirituality of St Francis and St Clare of Assisi and embraces the values of creating a caring community, showing compassion, reverencing all of creation and making peace,” he said.

“It has particular relevance today in the example and teachings of our Pope,” he said.

Catholic Education Services Executive Director Bill Dixon said the new college was on track to open for Year 7 in 2022. The college is expected to have about 750 students by the time all year levels (7-12) are offered in 2027.

“We have accreditation from the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board, our negotiations for the JCU lease are at an advanced stage, master planning and design works are on schedule for our application for capital funding in March next year,” he said.

“We’ve also received enormous interest from families wishing to enrol at the college, not only from the northern beaches but also Port Douglas, Mossman, the Tablelands, as well as across Cairns. There is no doubt the college has captured the public imagination,” he said.

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