

You are Peter

The Roman Catholic Church has been in existence for over two thousand years.

It was in this community that St Francis of Assisi learned the gospels. It was among the priests and people that this saint was introduced to the scriptures.

The corruption in the church he opposed, and contradicted by his lifestyle was never comfortable with this charismatic figure.

Never the less as a result of the existence of this imperfect church the promise of Christ was planted in the heart of this man.

Today the church is far from perfect. The expression of the church dependant largely upon an older generation restricted by circumstance.

You are the church

You are Peter

Our God who does not need you. Still our God loves you. Thus God calls you to participate in this faulty organisation. To share in the living of the Gospel. Then because of your presence, this generation's saints will hear the Gospel, will touch the sacraments, will begin the journey guided by tradition.

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You are that important

St Vincent de Paul was brought up in a church that was still struggling with the reformation. He was ordained to the Roman Catholic faith at the age of nineteen. An act which at the time was not allowed by the Laws of the church. Things were a mess.

Mess or not it was in this community that St Vincent learned of the promise of Christ in the Gospels. After many adventures he worked at the education of an ignorant clergy, so as to add clarity, to the message.

It was in this imperfect church that his mission to the poor found workers, motivation, and justification.

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John Hume went to St Columba's Catholic grammar school in Derry. Then on to St Patrick's College Maynooth.

The Catholic Church that this man was born into was seen as being in opposition to the Protestant churches in Northern Ireland.

It was in this bigoted atmosphere that John Hume heard of the Gospel of Christ. It was in this segregated community that he had access to the sacraments, and valid traditions.

He saw himself as following the lead of Martin Luther King, a Baptist Minister. Who himself was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi.

The life long journey of reconciliation that John Hume followed could begin because his family, his community had a visible tangible expression of faith. The church was not just an idea. It was a neighbour who went daily to mass. It was a school teacher who followed the Catholic ethos, it was the old men smoking and chatting after mass.

It was a physical reality

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You truly are Peter

The living expression of the promise of Christ Jesus.