

DIVINE RENOVATION PRESENTATION

Greetings friends in Christ.

I have been asked to talk about the subject of Divine Renovation. When I first heard this term it left me blank. I'm guessing you may be in the same boat.

What does it mean?

To renovate something, is to update, and to bring back to life an object which is considered in real need of improvement.

In our case it is the Church's delivery of our Roman Catholic Faith which rightly, according to Pope Francis, in need of a major overhaul to bring it into the 21st century, and to use all the new methods of communication we have at our disposal.

We only need to look around here, at the age group we are, to see how many are in our 50's, 60's and 70's etc; and how few young members of our congregation are here today.

Times have massively changed in values. Young people today are highly materialistic. They see our faith and belief as fictional, imaginary and unattractive in today's values. Youngsters want excitement, social media, computer games, football etc. They see no value in coming to a Mass, sitting in a seat, being bored to tears at what is before them at the altar, and hearing prayers they do not have any understanding.

Today, the church still tells them they are **sinners**, in seeking a life of depravity, and are doomed to hell. How attractive is that?

Non-believers - and that includes many young adults and children who were baptised in this church, were not brought up by their parents in practising the Faith. They see Christian religion as a fanciful legend or a fairy tale, which starts "Once upon a time there as this man Jesus..." and ends with "and they all lived happily ever after (in heaven).

We are on a ship, something like the Titanic, snugly warm in the comfort of ancient convention, but unaware that we could also hit a very cold and uninviting iceberg called "out of date". Time is of the essence and we must deal with the problem. If we were to start sinking, we must throw unnecessary items overboard to lighten and save the ship. We would need to man the lifeboats to save us and to get away from **THE** iceberg we named "**out of date**".

We must not sink!!

Christianity began when Jesus started His mission on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. He was wandering along the shore when he saw a couple of fishermen by their fishing boat, mending their nets. "How's it going chaps?" Jesus asked them.

They replied, "It's hopeless. We've been fishing all night, and haven't caught a thing"..... In reply, Jesus then says, "That's bad. Listen lads, push your boat out again, just a few yards off the shore, and drop your nets over the side. Well we all know the outcome of that event.

Jesus had attracted those men with a significant element of **materialism**. He didn't tell them they were sinners, or demand they kneel and adore Him. He had attracted them (by His miracle). They were astounded, and wanted to follow him.

Over many centuries, our Church has had theologians, many interfering with the simple messages from Christ. The message from Christ, are so simple to understand, (sometimes, hard to follow),..... but these theologians felt the need to add their own spin to these Words of God. What an insult, ...What an affront!! Jesus knew exactly what he wanted to say to His followers. No more, no less.

Jesus, attracted thousands by His materialistic actions (healing), and words (parables). His apostles and disciples picked up his message and were instructed..... **"To go and teach all nations."**

Never has the world had so much change through technology as it has experienced in the last 200 years and especially in the last 50. But, in the same period, there has been very little discernible change in the methods used by the church to attract weak, lapsed or non-believers. It still tells us we are sinners. I prefer the description of us as **Repentant Souls**. After all, if we are not repentant, then why do we bother with appearing to act like Christians?

The Church **must** renovate itself. It must rid itself of all negative and unattracting attitudes. It must become EXTROVERT and **encouraging and attracting**. For centuries it has been INTROVERT and authoritative, only attending to the sinful faithful, and not establishing new ways of going out and attracting new members IN. We are not talking about knocking on doors, but we are now being given the opportunity to put forward our ideas that will cause outsiders to listen, **to be inquisitive** and to find out more about what they previously believed was bunkum.

What we are about to do, is to put together a coherent plan as to how we believe the Church can regenerate (RENOVATE) itself. We have no intention of deviating in the slightest from the true teachings of Christ and of the events in the Bible. We will then submit our ideas. **This is Phase 1.**

But here comes the rub. It is then up to the hierarchy in the Church in Rome to adopt these ideas which are coming from thousands of parishes like ours. **This is called Phase 2.** Can the hierarchy come up to the line??

We are blessed that our Holy Father Pope Francis has started the ball rolling. We've just got to get the Cardinals on his side!!

We can only pray that they will come to their senses, and enthusiastically tackle this enormous problem (to save the ship). It is going to take a few years, but, we can be proud that we contributed to saving our Church, and filling it with the generations of young enthusiastic people to come.

We are being given a unique and **never before offered** opportunity to have our say in how we think the Church could be improved and become much more attractive, yet still under pinned with the unchanging teachings of Christ and the words of the Holy Bible.

Fr Jamie is driving our parish's involvement with this fantastic project. If you believe you want to get involved, and to find out how you can personally contribute, please contact Fr Jamie.

His contact details are in the Divine Renovation article of the newsletter.

We owe the opportunity of salvation to our future generations.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING. AMEN

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