*I had been watching the Pope’s visit to Iraq bringing hopefulness to the region and talking to the Muslim leader of his hope for dialogue with other faiths, whilst I was at the same time reading Cardinal Basil Hume’s book called ‘The Mystery of Love’ on the chapter of Hope. Surprising how all things come together at one time.....so here is a part of his chapter on HOPE. It is a deeply spiritual book, profound, yet simple, encouraging prayer and meditation.*

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‘Hope comes from faith and leads to love. It is, in part, a state of expectancy, the looking forward to the fulfilment of God’s promises to us. It is hope that spurs us on to risk all for the love of God. It is hope which gives rise to great enterprises undertaken for the honour and glory of God.

There is an urgent task to be done in our time. It is to give hope to a world where disillusionment is widespread. To show our contemporaries that in the Word of God, and his Sacraments, they can be touched by the divine and be cheered.

We are not living in a world devoid of hope and divorced from God. We may be buffeted

by the prevailing winds of unbelief. We may suffer from society’s generalised distrust

of organised religion and Church structures. But at the same time there is still to be found in unexpected places a persistent thirst for God and for the life of the Spirit, a certain longing for prayer and meditation, and a curiosity about all forms of religious

experience. There remains the inner restlessness of the human spirit and its ceaseless search for meaning and fulfilment.

If we do not believe there is a heaven beyond and outside this present life, for which we are ultimately destined, then life is difficult indeed and our mood one of pessimism. Why ? Man has deep aspirations and limitless desires which almost instinctively we

sense must be fulfilled or else life is absurd and certain failure. No, it is not so. There

is a gentle breeze, if we can but catch it, which blows all the time to help us on our

journey through life to our final destination. That breeze is the Holy Spirit.

Life is often like going through a dark tunnel, knowing that at the end there is light.

But you have to keep going. From time to time there are chinks of light but you have to pass beyond them. It is the memory of those chinks that keeps us going along the tunnel of life, knowing that at the end you will be coming out into this marvellous light.

All the time, someone is walking with you, helping you, sometimes carrying you.’

Cardinal Basil Hume.....from his book “The Mystery of Love”......DLT....1996.