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GOOD MORNING

The childhood memories came flooding back as I watched the Queen in Enniskillen. I grew up there. She was in the Cathedral in the middle of town - I joined the choir there as a child of eight. She went to St Michael's Roman Catholic Church just across the street - first visit to a Catholic Church in Northern Ireland. Child of a liberal background that I am, I still remember the tinge of almost innate sectarianism. We used to go in and out of the revolving door of that church - never inside but just quickly in and out - afraid of something - but what?

The focus yesterday of course was on the handshake with Martin Maguinness. It was a very significant point on the long journey towards a peaceful future. In the room, there were many ghosts - the memory of Lord Mountbatten, the sacrifices of members of the security forces, the lives of young men and women squandered in long and hopeless conflict, the innocent people caught in the crossfire, lives blighted by fear and anger, emigration of some of the best and the brightest.

I think that this is all about things that get stuck. It happens with wars. It's true too of difficult relationships in our fragile families and kinship. It's in the sectarianism of Ireland - and the sectarianism of Scotland which we increasingly try to address.

Unsticking it is partly a political task - but I think it is always a spiritual task. In the years when I worked in Northern Ireland, there was often talk of the need for apology and forgiveness. It's hard to imagine - but that too became a weapon of conflict as we argued about who would move first and exactly what they might say.

What the Queen has done is to understand the power - the potential - in her office to unstick and move on situations by simply being present and acting. In Dublin and in Northern Ireland she has shown that often it is enough to be present and to act in a way which symbolises the new.

War is costly. But so is peacemaking.