

## **A People Place**

If this is not a place where tears are understood,  
Where do I go to cry?

If this is not a place where my spirits can take wing,  
Where do I go to fly?

If this is not a place where my questions can be asked,  
Where do I go to seek?

If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard,  
Where do I go to speak?

If this is not a place where you'll accept me as I am,  
Where can I go to be?

If this is not a place where I can try to learn and grow,  
Where can I be just me?

*William J. Crocker*

### **Intervention by Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster at the Synod of Bishops on 14 October 1980**

I heard a voice speaking, and it spoke of the Church, and I saw in my dream a vision. It was a vision of the Church. I saw a fortress, strong and upstanding. Every stranger approaching seemed to those who defended it to be an enemy to be repelled; from that fortress the voices of those outside could not be heard.

Then I had another vision. It was of a pilgrim, a pilgrim through history and through life. That pilgrim was the Church. The pilgrim was hastening towards the vision, towards all Truth. But it had not yet reached it. It limped along the road. But meanwhile there were sign-posts to show the way, or rather they told you that this or that road was not the right one. The pilgrim is always in search, I reflected, and that can be painful. The leaders, too, of the pilgrimage are often themselves not always clear. They must sometimes co-agonize with the other pilgrims. Co-responsibility will always involve co-agonizing.

The fortress was a temple, but the pilgrims lived in a tent. It is sometimes better to know the uncertainties of Abraham's tent than to sit secure in Solomon's temple.

- How have you experienced the Church as a fortress, strong and upstanding?
- How have you experienced the Church as the pilgrim limping along the road?

