

There is a Place for You

There is a place for you.

We all long to be told “there is a place for you.”

Whether it is a hotel room, an apartment, a course, a program, a job, a seat on an airplane or in the group. We long to be told “there is a place for you.”

Whether we seek safety or relief, to escape or to hide, or to seek something new, something exciting or something different. We long to be told “there is a place for you.”

We long for the place where we can belong.

It may be a physical home that is safe, warm, dry, and ours, even if it is only temporarily. It may be a community that is home, a group of like people to which we can belong. It may be a community of family, of friends, in a church, in a neighbourhood or even across the country.

It is a place where we feel that we are safe and it is a place where we are always welcome.

In the First Letter of Peter, we heard Peter’s invitation to be like living stones and to let ourselves be built into a spiritual house. It is an invitation to follow Jesus and to be part of a community of followers. To be are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to be God’s own people.

It is an invitation to belong to a community, belong to a family, to belong where there is a place for you. It is a place where together we provide safety, warmth, and comfort, not a physical building made of wood and stone but a gathered community with Jesus caring for each other.

Peter describes Jesus as a living stone. Yet Jesus was the very stone that was rejected by humans. He was arrested, flogged and put to death on a cross because he did not fit. He was like the odd shaped stone with rough edges and uneven sides, like the stone that does not fit with the rest of the building blocks. Like the stone that is tossed aside by the builders and stonemasons to become fill, or worse yet lies around to become a tripping hazard, he was rejected and tossed aside.

Yet God chose Jesus as the cornerstone.

Today we are familiar with the cornerstone that is a decorative stone placed near the front of the building usually giving the building name, when it was opened and sometimes the name or event associated with the opening. Often it is added after the building is completed. When an organization moves to a new building, they sometimes take the old cornerstone with them and add it to the new building to invoke the aura of stability and continuity of the organization.

In Jesus day, a cornerstone was the basis of the construction of the whole building. Selecting the right stone impacted not only the aesthetics of the building but more importantly the stability and longevity of the building. If the cornerstone was not square the building would be crooked.

Thrown to one side and tossed on the garbage heap of humanity, Jesus is now the living cornerstone of the spiritual house, and we are the living stones that make the community.

There is a place in this home for you.

In the Gospel of John, we hear Jesus speak of his Father's house where there are many dwelling places and where Jesus has prepared a place for you, for us.

And even better news, Jesus has promised that he will return and take us to that place himself.

On a cautionary note, I very much doubt that God's house is a place where we can lounge around curled up in comfy fluffy clouds with angels feeding us sweets and other tasty goodies.

There is a place in God's house for you.

As Jesus says to Philip, the way to God's house is through Jesus. And far from being up in the clouds or in heaven, wherever it is, God's house is here on earth, right here.

As Jesus tells the crowd gathered around him, God dwells in us and we dwell in God.

It is the community that we build together, in our families, with our friends, in the parish, and in the neighbourhood.

God's house is a place built with Jesus as the cornerstone, the living foundation that keeps the building stable and strong.

God's house is a place that offers warmth, safety, security, love and hospitality.

God's house is a place where spirits will be nourished by rest, serenity, joy, peace, gentleness, kindness and generosity.

There is a place for you.

Dwelling in God's house, we will do the works that Jesus does. In fact, Jesus promises that believing in him, we will do even greater works.

Those greater works are to share the invitation to God's house by loving our neighbour.

Offering warmth, safety, security, love and hospitality to all, as we have been loved.

As Peter said in his letter,

“Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.” (1 Peter 2:10)

In God's house, there is a place for you.

Thanks be to God.

Readings: John 14:1-14
 1 Peter 2:2-10