



Many Rooms

1 February 2015

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (John 14:2-3)

Kathy and I have now lived in the same house for 20 years. We've been there so long that every part of the building and grounds hold memories for us. In the downstairs is a room that our sons each occupied once they were old enough to move to the basement. Adam moved there when he was about 13 and Ben followed him four years later when Adam left home. Over the years the decorations and posters have changed along with the colour of paint on the walls (it was dark red for a couple of years!) but both boys have left their mark on the room and many of their things still occupy the shelves and the dresser drawers.

Adam and Ben moved in and out of the room many times over the years as they went through universities here and elsewhere. They had various apartments with friends but somehow they kept coming and going from our basement during and between academic and work terms. And that continues. Adam had the room during Christmas and Ben will have it next week when he comes home for a late Christmas. In between their stays many others use the room and there have been an assortment of friends and visitors over the years. The most frequent such visitor to stay there of late has been our Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, and we renamed it the "Primate Suite" in his honour each time. But the truth is that the room will always be Adam's and Ben's to us.

One of the reasons we have kept the room unchanged is to provide a safe place for our boys to return to when their journeys bring them home. They always know they can come home to rest or to restore themselves. It always comes rent-free with unlimited amounts of Mom's cooking and even free laundry service thrown in. We've committed to keep a room for them as long as we can but we know that cannot be forever.

Yesterday (January 31), I attended two funerals of fathers of priests of our diocese. I was so glad I could do that because too often my travel and schedule prevent me from even seeing the person at the time and I have to settle for a telephone call to them. But yesterday, along with Archdeacon Sandra, I was able to get to the funeral for David Evans, the father of the Reverend Eli Evans, and also the funeral of Edward Samson Sr., the father of the Reverend Ed Samson. At the funeral for his father, the Reverend Ed Samson spoke and quoted the passage from John's Gospel where Jesus speaks of many rooms in his Father's house, enough for all who believe. And such rooms will be specially prepared for each of us when we leave this world ("even one for Bishop Geoff," according to Ed in his homily).

As I listened to Ed speak I found myself thinking of the room Kathy and I keep in our home for our sons. A place where they can always come home to rest and be safe with someone who loves them. And I heard that Gospel in a new way. Ed's words gave me great comfort in knowing that even today our Lord is preparing a place for us in heaven where we can be with him eternally.

We all need to know that such a place is kept for us by our Heavenly Father. I believe it's even better than one kept by our earthly mothers and fathers.

For the one God offers is forever and ever.

Blessings,
+Geoff