

Many rooms in his Father's house signify many ways of serving in God's house. 5th Sunday of Easter May 10th, 2020 (Acts 6:1-7, 1Peter 2:2-9, John 14:1-12)

My brothers and sisters, I know you might have met people in your lives who promise you everything but then deliver absolutely nothing. We too might have also been guilty of giving people assurances but end up disappointing them. The readings for this 5th Sunday of Easter are a wake-up call on us to accept Jesus as our Way of life who never fails in his promises to us. Jesus has given us a great number of promises in the gospels, how to stand on His promises and how to overcome the temptation to give up. One of the central promises of Jesus is found in today's readings, especially in the gospel reading.

Jesus promises that there are "many rooms" present in his Father's house, and so Heaven is our real home. The "many rooms or mansions" in his Father's house also signify the many ways we can help or serve each other in His Church which is the house of his Father. This is what the Apostles did in our first reading from Acts to solve a problem of tribal tension in the Christian Community of Jerusalem. To resolve the discriminations in the sharing of food between the Hellenist Widows and the Hebrew Widows, the Twelve Apostles appointed seven assistants to offer Christian services to these widows.

Our 2nd reading from 1Peter uses the image of a new building with Jesus as its cornerstone. St. Peter says that in this new building, we are the chosen race whose way to the Father is the service of our brothers and sisters.

Jesus emphasises his promise to us in today's gospel from John, "In my Father's house, there are many rooms, if that were not so, I would not have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you." Jesus uses the word "house" to represent the whole realm of Heaven where God reigns. We might think of it like the White House which stand for the whole of American country. Also think of the house of David which stood for the whole Kingdom of Israel.

That is why at a point in time Jesus said, "foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head", thus emphasising the importance of a house as a place of service, comfort and joy. So, Jesus uses the word "house" to symbolise the whole dynasty and rule of God where there will be fullness of Joy and Comfort.

Christ has gone before us to his Father's house, and he is preparing a place for you and me. Just as there are many ways of giving up one's life, so also there are many ways of serving each other in the house of God. Let us keep trusting in Jesus' promise, so that after our faithful service on earth, we may inherit the Joy and Comfort in God's house. Happy Mother's Day to Our Mums. **Amen.**

By Fr Emmanuel Subaar