

Funeral homily for Connie Bieg:

At one time or another, most of us have stayed overnight in a motel or hotel. Upon our arrival, we are likely to ask the hotel manager two questions: Question one: "Is my room ready yet?" and question two, "What time must I check out?"

The hotel room is not our permanent dwelling. We occupy the room for a short time and then we depart. The room is then given to someone else. We live here in this life and must move on. We are no more than temporary boarders. No room can be reserved for eternity. We are simply passing through. At some point in life we begin to realize that we are on the road and that someday, a day known only to God, we must leave.

In one of his sermons Saint Augustine writes,

"We are travelers on a journey. We cannot stay in this place forever. We are on our way, not yet home. Our present state is one of joyful anticipation, not yet unending enjoyment."

I recall visiting a patient in my capacity as chaplain at Saint Peter's Hospital several years ago. After introducing myself, I asked him how he was faring as a gravely ill man living in the shadow of death. His reply was humorous and spot on. He said, "Father, my bags are packed. I'm checking out. The hour of my death has arrived".

A permanent dwelling is reserved for us in eternity. On the night before his death Jesus assured his disciples that he was going to prepare a place for his disciples. He said, "I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be". Our destination is "the Father's house". Death means that our earthly pilgrimage has ended and we are going home. Recall the words of Saint Paul: "We would much rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord".

Our Lord reserved Connie a room in his Father's house.

Connie was a gentle soul. She and her husband, Al, were faithful churchgoers. I often chatted with them following Sunday mass. True to her Christian vocation, Connie was a loving wife and mother, faithful parishioner and a dedicated long-time employee of Emma Willard School.

She will be missed by her parish family.

May she rest in peace.