

### **The Best is yet to come**

Jesus said: "Fill the jars with water...Now draw some out and take it to the chief steward." ...  
When the steward tasted the water that had become wine... the Steward said to the bridegroom:  
"Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become  
drunk..."

The story of Jesus at the wedding in Cana of Galilee in John's Gospel reminds me of the  
refrain in a Frank Sinatra song: "The best is yet to come, and Babe won't it be fine..."

When the wine at the wedding had been consumed, Jesus took the opportunity to  
not only provide more wine—he provided the best wine!

Let us remind ourselves that the Gospel of John is often more than just a relating of events in  
the life of Jesus. John's adding the event of the wedding of Cana in his Gospel is an important  
reminder to Christian readers that

1. Jesus **is** the Messiah.
2. His followers must be alert observers and servants.
3. Jesus provides all things necessary.

In short, Jesus' changing water into wine is actually a "sign" to those who are His followers.  
When things seem empty with no way to replenish, Jesus will not only provide replenishment,  
but excellent, filled-to-the-brim replenishment.

As we see in the story, everyone around is oblivious to what Jesus is doing—accept the  
servants.

**We** are those servants.

Jesus provides (changes water into wine); but we take that wine to those in need.

Wine, therefore, is the metaphor for human needs. Christians, as servants, are the stone jars  
that are filled with water, but when Jesus touches us—taps us on the shoulder so to speak, our  
**water** becomes **wine** and we become the conveyors; carrying the wine to those who are in need.

I have to admit, I am not always quick to recognize metaphors. Realizing that I am a stone  
vessel for the creation of water into wine for someone who is in need was, in a word,  
an Epiphany! No wonder this story is read in the Season of Epiphany! It is part of the on-going  
revelation of Jesus to the world that he is truly the Son of God  
and thus has the power to give us all that we need, when and how, we need it.

Getting down to the nitty gritty of it, the wine we each carry is for ourselves **and** for others; we partake even as we are pouring out for those in need.

The Apostle Paul reveals to us how this is done. Just a few minutes ago we heard this read. Did we pay attention? Let us read it again. It is on page 6 of your bulletin starting on the second paragraph.

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.”

So once again, we are all vessels—stone jars—filled with the water of life. God activates our water to become wine (manifestation of the Spirit) for the common good.

We do not all have the same varietal. Our wine is individual—unique to each of us. We are all called to share our wine to the benefit of everyone—as each has need.

Your varietal maybe that of listening. Perhaps you may be called to be a Stephen Minister. Last week we commissioned three new Stephen Ministers who are ready to pour their special wine out to someone who needs a Christian listening ear.

Your varietal could be working as a volunteer at a non-profit organization, such as St. Barnabas’ Thrift shop, the Five Cities Homeless Coalition, or Hospice.

Perhaps you have a special mathematical varietal to offer to the finance committee here at St. Barnabas or another organization. Or you might help someone with lesser means with their tax preparation.

Maybe you work in healthcare and use your wine to nurture the very ill.

Nurturing children particularly those with special needs, or the elderly infirm, writing letters to the incarcerated, helping an immigrant settle in a new land, caring for our Earth and all of its creatures, or even helping a neighbor you haven’t gotten to know yet; whatever your special

wine is—it is the gift from Jesus who has transformed you into his servant with the unique ability to replenish the supply to one, to a few, or even to many.

Importantly, each time you do, you are giving the best—the best because it comes from Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

How cool is that! How cool is that!

However, we do have a huge responsibility in this. We must make sure that we don't allow our water of life to run low or dry. We need replenishment as well as giving replenishment.

Regular daily conversation with Jesus keeps us focused on what is central for life.

I have a friend who, in the morning, pours herself a cup of coffee and has quiet time in which she reads scripture or other meditational writings and prays. She calls it Coffee with God.

Then, regular association with fellow Christians in both worship and socialization helps build up our water reserves.

Now I realize in this time of the Covid Omicron version of the pandemic we are still needing to be very careful about gathering together, but we **can** make phone calls—even the old-fashioned kind.

We need to be honest about how we are feeling and not isolate so much that we become disconnected. Reaching out every day to connect spiritually, mentally, and emotionally will help keep our stone jar from going dry.

In case you hadn't guessed it, water and wine are very closely connected. There is no wine without water. God fills our stone bodies with the water of life, and then Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, can transform our water into refreshing wine.

Whether it is being filled with the water of life or the wine of healing that is needed, Jesus has both.

If you are feeling low, if you are feeling empty, take heart, the best is yet to come, Jesus is making just the right wine for what you need.