

**“Everyone serves good wine first,
and then when people have drunk
freely, an inferior one; but you have
kept the good wine until now.”**

JOHN 2:10

When Water Becomes Wine

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

For all of us, at one time or another, life seems to run out of wine. We look at our relationships and find ourselves saying, “There’s no more wine.” It may be a friendship of five years or a marriage of twenty-five years, but, for some, the wine runs out. For others, it is the job that loses its challenge. Or, one day, the foreman gathers everyone to announce that the plant is closing. In a moment, all has turned into vinegar; there is no more wine. For others still, it is when retirement suffocates the future, choking all that once gave meaning.

However, there are also those times when hope is reborn, when we feel “espoused” not only by life but also by God, when the ordinary turns extraordinary—and the water becomes wine. It is the phone call offering a new job after we have collected unemployment checks for months. It is falling in love when we have given up on the notion. It is conceiving a child after years of barren waiting. It is someone who listens, finally, when no one else would. It is at times like these—and many others as well—when we are caught off-balance and trip into God unwittingly, saved from drudgery and redeemed to live a life enriched, when water is turned into wine. It is a deeply felt joy that reveals God’s presence. ●

Reflect

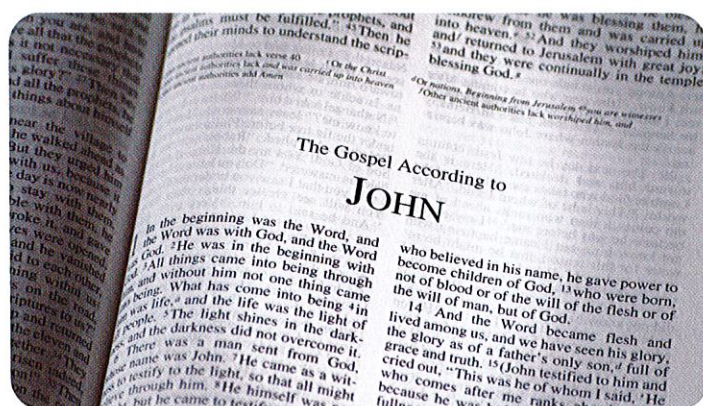
Is there an area in your life where you need “new wine”?

Dear Padre,

Is there a year of John? I know we're now in the year of Luke, next year will be the year of Matthew, and the following year will be the year of Mark. Then the cycle starts over with Luke. Why doesn't John have a year?

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, collectively known as the synoptic gospels, are narrative gospels. Together, they tell the story of Jesus of Nazareth. Although in some ways they might be understood synoptically, "the same," each narrative is unique in its emphasis. The Church desires that we hear these narratives and be nourished through the proclamation of the early memories of the Christian community.

John's Gospel, on the other hand, is not primarily a narrative, but is best understood as theological. As such, it is highly dependent on the use of symbolic representations to make the point it intends. For example, "I am the light of the world."



Whoever follows me...will have the light of life" (John 8:12). The interplay between light and darkness illustrates the point. John's Gospel is intended to be experienced and engaged in as "bigger than life," proposing and celebrating Christian themes that are life-giving and inviting. Therefore, we hear John's Gospel when the Church celebrates the mystery of the saving life and resurrection of Jesus. For this reason, the Gospel of John is proclaimed on Good Friday, during the Easter season, and on other major feasts.

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
January 20	January 21	January 22	January 23	January 24	January 25	January 26
Weekday	St. Agnes, Virgin and Martyr	Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children	Weekday	St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Heb 5:1-10	Heb 6:10-20	Heb 7:1-3, 15-17	Heb 7:25-8:6	Heb 8:6-13	Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22	Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10
Mk 2:18-22	Mk 2:23-28	Mk 3:1-6	Mk 3:7-12	Mk 3:13-19	Mk 16:15-18	1 Cor 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27
						Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

I suggest an exercise.... Let us think about that difficult moment in which God let me experience his love.... And let us ask ourselves: with which discrete and loving signs did he let me feel his tenderness? When did I feel the Lord nearer? When did I feel his tenderness and his compassion?

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