

THE NEW WINE

SERVANTS OF THE CROSS †

Celebrating the call years since our beginnings

BE EVER READY TO MAKE AN ACCOUNT FOR THE HOPE THAT IS FOUND IN YOU. (1 PETER 3:15)

VESSELS OF NEW WINE

DURING OUR COMMUNITY DAYS WE LISTENED TO SOME OF FR. BOB BEDARD'S HOMILIES. ONE HOMILY STUCK OUT THAT WE THOUGHT WOULD FIT FOR THIS ISSUE. AS WE CELEBRATE 10 YEARS, FR. BOB REMINDS US THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD MUST ALWAYS BE RENEWED, THAT YOU AND I NEED TO BE VESSELS OF THE NEW WINE!

Fr. Bob Bedard's Homily from September 6, 1991

No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. Rather new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins. (Luke 5:37-38)

Jesus continues to give little examples to make the points that he wants to make. He talks about wine and pouring wine, keeping wine for a rainy day, for another occasion. They kept wine in animal skins in those days, carried it around that way. I guess glass had not been invented yet. But Jesus uses the example of wine and wineskins not because he wants to explain to them something about wine, but because he has a point. He's not talking about wine at all. *The new wine that he's speaking of is the Good News.* It is the proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom of God. The Good News is that it's life forever that God is offering people. And that Jesus has come to make it possible. That's the Good News. That's the new wine.

RECEIVING THE NEW WINE

What he would say about the new wine is that if we open up to it, it has power to preserve us and to transform us and to bless us and to lead us into eternal life. That's what he would say. But he says in order to receive the new wine, *you've got to be a vessel* that can receive it, that can hold it, help it to preserve, and stay, or whatever it is that wine is supposed to do when it gets into the vessels it's supposed to be in. The vessels that receive it have got to be right. *And the vessels that are to receive the new wine, which is the Good News, are ourselves.* So, he would say, in this example, and other examples in a similar way, that what we need are fresh skins. Got to be fresh. Got to be new somehow. There's got to be a renewal of the person to receive the Good News. Now he's talking to, among others, Pharisees and Scribes. And they weren't ready to receive the new wine. They weren't. The receptacles of their persons were not ready for the new wine. The problem was, with the Scribes and the Pharisees, is that in spite of the fact that they were very religious, they still didn't have it straight with the Lord. They needed to be renewed or to be made new again.

NEED TO BE RENEWED

The difference, I think, or the distinction is between observance and relationship. What we do when we come



Continued on next page

Continued (Fr. Bob Bedard) ...

to Church here is we execute an observance. When we say the rosary, it's another observance. When we receive communion, it's an observance. Go to confession; these are all observances. And they're all wonderful. They're fantastic. They're great gifts of God. But, you see, there is the danger that observances can run dry and need to be renewed. Our religion has to do with a relationship with the Lord. That's what has to be renewed. I can do all the observing that I like, but if my relationship isn't straight with the Lord, it's not going to make it. We can become like the Scribes and the Pharisees, who were very good at observances. They were good at religious practices. They did them all the time. But somehow it didn't get them ready to receive the new wine, the Good News of the Lord.

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

That's a challenge for us. Jesus would say the same thing to us. In order to receive the Good News, to let it dwell within me, within you, within us, so that it can transform us and bring us alive in faith and carry us along to eternal life. In order to do this, we have to be renewed continually. It's a good thing to review in our lives. Where do we stand? Like if we're here at church, if we're regular at prayers and stuff like that, the observances are in pretty good shape. But how's the relationship with the Lord himself? Do we need to renew that surrender to him? Do we need to get it straight with him again? Do we need to get back to falling in love with the Lord? Because that's at the heart of who we're supposed to be. And if we're renewed that way, then the new wine can be contained within us. The observances flow out of that. My religious observances need to flow out of my relationship with God.

FINDING A HOME IN ME

It is possible, and it happens, and unfortunately, it did happen with the Scribes and the Pharisees, that the religious observances kept on, but the relationship died. The relationship just simply kind of petered away. There wasn't that commitment to the Lord each day, that surrender, that saying, "Lord, take me, do with me what you like, push me, pull me, move me, plant me, whatever." That's what we've got to be doing, that's *the continual renewal of the relationship with the Lord* that you and I need. I need that every day. I need to come before the Lord every day and make a surrender and say hey, I've got nothing going for me, I need you. You, I need. I've got to have you, I've got to have your presence, I need your Holy Spirit to direct me. I need to know you better. I want to know you better. I'll do whatever you like. I have to be making that kind of presentation of myself before the Lord everyday so that I can be continually renewed. So that the new wine, the Good News, can find a home in me and it can grow, bring me, move me forward the way the Lord wants me to. It's a challenge for us, isn't it? Because we do make religious observances. How's the relationship? The observances are in good shape here. Relationship; I need to review that and have that renewed daily by the Lord. I think that that's what Jesus is saying to us about the new wine and the old skins. †

A NEW BEGINNING

Marie Nigro

"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God." (Romans 8:28).

This scripture passage is the one that I believe best sums up my volunteering with the Servants of the Cross.

I was born in Buffalo, New York, but have lived in Ontario my whole life, first in Fort Erie, then the Toronto area, and now Ottawa. My faith has always been with me, and was key in my decision to move to Ottawa to help the Servants.

I was introduced to the Servants by my spiritual director while I was still living in Toronto. While attending a vocational event at the Servants, I spontaneously put the offer on the table one day, "Maybe I'm meant to help out as a lay person." I had been discerning the call to enter their community but felt more on my heart that I was to mission alongside the sisters as a lay person. The idea felt so right. The idea just leapt in my heart. Sometimes the Lord moves in such mysterious ways that I know I need to just give Him permission. I was ecstatic! I felt so much peace in my heart. After making the necessary arrangements with work, finding a place to live in Ottawa, and saying good-bye to all the people I care about in Toronto, I moved to our nation's capital in April 2012 – the Lord had me up in Ottawa within 5 months from hearing the call to help out the Sisters. I'd always had the desire to live one day in Ottawa but never thought the day would come!

So far, so good. I enjoy helping the Servants any way I can because they are such a joyful, spiritual group of women to be around. Through them, I've met many wonderful people. By helping them, I am aiding in their mission of evangelization, and through that, I serve God and receive many blessings. It gives my life purpose, focus, and meaning and it's an opportunity I will forever be grateful for. †



Sr. Stephanie and Marie enjoying the fall colours in Ottawa

VESSELS OF GOOD NEWS

Half our work simply gets done because of the witness of our habits. People approach us often with lots of questions and before they know it they are being drawn into hearing the gospel message. We were at the Museum of Civilization (touring with Lizette's parents) when a young agnostic was captivated with our habits, he asked many questions and got an invitation to attend our promises. And now... he has a community interceding for him and his conversion of heart. So it's our mission to get out there and be with the people whether it is at Niagara Falls, a hot tourist spot, or playing the pots and pans on Canada Day with the children. We want to be a witness of His love, responding generously to a scripture passage that is close to our hearts and close to our mission: "Be ever ready to make an account for the hope that is found in you." 1 Peter 3:15



Top Row: Sr. Anna at the Museum of Civilization, Srs. Monique and Melinda on our Community Days, Sr. Vicki and Lizette at Niagara Falls; **Bottom Row:** Srs. Monique and Melinda at Canada Day Festivities, the sisters taking a photo opportunity, Sr. Stephanie at the Catholic Family Life Conference in Alberta.

Dear Friends and Family,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Well, I hope summer was hot enough for you. I spoke to Lizette on the telephone over the summer and she had been watching the weather up here in Ottawa; she couldn't believe the temperatures were hotter here than they were in Houston! Sr. Stephanie also went home for two months tinkering around the farm, cutting hedges for neighbours, and soaking in quality time with her family. As for the rest of the sisters, we stuck around for a month of summer formation. Part of our formation included Heather Simpson coming over to give us voice lessons. We giggled a lot with all the fun trills of exercising our voices and I think it's really paying off.

All of us re-gathered from summer holidays on Monday August 20th and in a blink of an eye, we dove head first into our first General Assembly, a momentous event in our history. We were blessed to have Fr. Scott McCaig and

Fr. Marc Syrenne of the Companions of the Cross present with us. Archbishop Terrence joined us later in the day presiding over our elections. By the grace of God, I was elected as Moderator and Sr. Monique and Sr. Melinda were elected as my Council.

'Nuns on the run?' We're moving full steam ahead promoting vocations. We're booking ourselves at different Companion parishes putting on breakfasts for women discerning the vocation. It looks like Our Lord has been preparing us through our ministry Eggs and Fellowship for *'Eggs on Wheels!'*

This coming June marks a very, very special moment in our history as a community: *celebrating 10 years since our beginnings!* We will take time leading up to next year in which we can give thanks to Our Lord for having called us to serve Him and serve His people. Stay tuned, our website will feature all that we will be doing to celebrate this momentous occasion. †

Sr. Anna Chan

SERVANTS OF THE CROSS

Women's Vocation Breakfast

Ottawa Locations:

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Parish
Saturday, Oct 20th, 2012

St. Mary's Parish
Saturday, Oct 27th, 2012

Annunciation of the Lord
Saturday, Nov 10th, 2012

St. Maurice Parish
Saturday, Nov 24th, 2012

*single?
between 18 - 35 yrs old?
ever thought of a vocation with
the Servants of the Cross?*

From 9 a.m. to Noon at your parish! Contact the Servants - 613-729-8710



TALAGA?

(Filipino for "Oh Really? Did you know?")

Our New Council!

We had our first General Assembly on August 23rd! Archbishop Terrence Prendergast presided over the election of our moderator, Sr. Anna Chan. Sr. Monique Bisson and Sr. Melinda Schenher were elected to her council. We pray that Our Lady will guide our council with wisdom and love.



Fill it to the Brim Our Wish List

As part of formation, each sister attends school for philosophy and theology. Our education better prepares us for the mission of evangelization by readying us with answers for the people who come to us with searching questions.

Would you prayerfully consider financially supporting us in our studies?

Costs for the 2012-2013 School Year:

Philosophy:
\$4,000/year

Theology:
\$4,000/year

Thank you for your prayers and support!



Mission Statement

The Servants of the Cross is a Roman Catholic community of women, committed to living and ministering together as sisters in the Lord. As Servants of the Cross, they are called to labour boldly for the renewal of the Church through a dynamic evangelization centred upon Christ crucified, who is God's power and wisdom. Prompted by the love of God, they desire all people to come into the fullness of life through a personal ongoing encounter with Jesus Christ.

Contact Info

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