

**Providing What We Need** Second Week of Easter Tuesday, April 5, 2016 8:15 AM  
Acts 4:32-37; **Jn 3:7-15** (St. Vincent Ferrer, priest) (We are really dealing with the expansion of our whole being beyond everything that we could imagine.)

**“Jesus said to Nicodemus, ‘You must be born from above.’”**

Or instead of “from above” you could say “again”—it’s the same word, *anōthen* in Greek; or instead of saying “born” you could say “begotten”—same word *yignethen*. So this is a way the evangelists like to play with words, especially the Fourth Gospel loves **wordplay**, and this is one of them. It’s **a key to a misunderstanding that leads to an understanding**. Nicodemus says, “Well, how can this be?” And how can it be?

This is about the same issue of newness that comes in so many different passages, for example, the whole idea of metanoia, often translated “repentance,” really means new-mindedness. **You have to think in a new way**. When Jesus says, “No one puts new wine into old wineskins,” he is talking about the wine of the kingdom and the wineskins are the way people think, the way they grow up in culture. We are taught language. We are taught concepts. We have our own experiences, which we then deal with. But wine in the kingdom is something that expands beyond all that; in a way it blows them up. So what **God is preparing is something so new**, so different from everything we could have ever known, **you just can’t patch the new onto the old**, so that he says, “You cannot sew a new patch onto an old garment.” This is all about newness: new birth, new begettings, new thinking, new categories, new wineskins, **new everything**.

Now some people find this too much; in fact, I would say it is too much. **We are really dealing with the expansion of our whole being beyond everything that we could imagine**; and we don’t like that. **We like things neat, orderly, predictable; well, God is anything but that!**

So Nicodemus is perplexed. We are perplexed. Everyone is perplexed. But we have to keep in mind that God is not about making life easy for us. **God is about sharing abundance with us beyond what we really want**—beyond what we really want, because what we really need is different from what we really want. We may really want to be comfortable, but what we need is to be alive—and that’s different. **And God is providing us what we need, not what we want.**