

Column

A number of years ago now I returned to my office at church to find a piece of paper on my desk. At the top, a member had written, "I thought you might find a use for this."

"This" was the story of a woman who had told her minister she wanted a fork placed in her hand when she died and was placed in the casket. Seeing the perplexed look on his face, she continued:

"Yes, remember those dinners we have at church. Almost invariably someone will come by and say, 'Save your fork. The best is yet to come. We have a whole table of desserts over there.' Well, I want a fork in my hand because I want folks to know that I believe the best is yet to come."

I don't know if the wishes of this woman were carried out (I suspect they were), but I do know what happened with the man who left the story on my desk.

A few weeks later, he died, and I found myself sitting at the same desk pondering what to say at his service. As I did, my eyes fell on a sheet of paper placed off to the side. At the top, was his note. My search was over. More than that, he got a fork placed on the table holding his cremated remains during his memorial service.

"The best is yet to come!" Surely, that is a scriptural thought. All believers should live in a state of expectation about the life to come . . . yet also, I want to suggest, we should not limit that spirit of expectation to some future state. Someone has said, "All the way to heaven is also heaven."

Pentecost, also called Whitsunday, is the guarantee of this. On this day – May 31 in this year's calendar -- we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit in a new way into the life of God's people. We have not been left as orphans. God Himself is with us and in us to strengthen and guide us.

The best is indeed yet to come in God's future and eternal Kingdom. St. Paul tells us as much when he writes: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1).

Nevertheless, we dare not narrow our focus to future blessings solely. No, every day that we open our eyes, let us expect and seek out new adventures, new opportunities for service and witness, new occasions for joy and

contentment. A song I learned in Vacation Bible School many years ago, says it all: “Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.”

As a reminder, you just might want to keep a fork in your front pocket!

O GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

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