

We Respond

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 21)

ANTIPHON: I will praise you Lord, in the assembly of your people.

RESPONSE: I will praise you Lord, in the assembly of your people.

LECTOR: My vows I will pay before those who fear him. The poor shall eat and shall have their fill. They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him. May their hearts live for ever and ever. **R.**

LECTOR: All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him. They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. **R.**

LECTOR: And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him. They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn: 'These things the Lord has done.' **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia! Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; my branches bear much fruit. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

TODAY'S READINGS Acts 9: 26-31; 1 John 3: 18-24; John 15: 1-8

NEXT WEEK (6th Sunday of Easter) Acts 10: 25-26, 34-35, 44-48; Psalm 97; 1 John 4: 7-10; John 15: 9-17

*Listen to
our prayer
podcasts*

Prayer is Life

Have you listened to our new podcasts about prayer? Prayer is Life is aimed at giving people a better understanding about prayer. The podcasts are led by Redemptorist priest David Hore CSsR. The series coincides with the start of a Year of Prayer announced by Pope Francis. For details and to listen go to: <https://majellan.media/prayer-is-life-podcast/>



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Jesus is the true vine



28 April 2024 5th Sunday Easter Year B

In these weeks after Easter and before the feasts of Ascension and Pentecost, our gospel readings come from Jesus' farewell discourses in the Gospel of John. These are the teachings which Jesus shared with his disciples in that precious time just before his arrest and crucifixion.

His teachings offered solace to his disciples who were soon to endure his passion and death. We now read and ponder them in the light of his resurrection and Ascension. They also offer comfort to us in our time and place, as we face life's challenges and sorrows.

Last week, the gospel recounted Jesus telling the disciples that he is the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep by name, who cares for them and protects them, and whose love and care is so great that he lays down his life for his sheep. This image of the Good Shepherd and his sheep describes a relationship of steadfast love and care.

This week, Jesus describes his relationship to his followers differently, this time in terms of a vine and its branches. This image highlights the intimacy, interconnection, mutuality and reciprocity of the relationship of Jesus to us, of Jesus to the Father, and of Jesus and the Father to us, individually and as a community.

Jesus explains that he is the true vine, the Father is the vine grower, and we are the branches. The image reminds us that we,

just like the vine and its branches, rely on each other in order to bear fruit.

But, most important of all, Jesus urges us: "Abide in me as I abide in you." To abide means to remain, to stay, to dwell, to make a home in, to endure, and to hold fast. This notion of 'abiding' is of utmost importance in John's Gospel. (Even in today's short reading this word, abide, occurs 8 times.)

Jesus is very clear: this abiding is essential and core to our relationship with him. It is this abiding in him and he in us that will result in great fruitfulness. The fruits will be life-giving fruits, internal as well as external, for us personally and for the community. They will be peace, freedom, justice, joy, and the flourishing of creation.

What then is the call and the challenge for us? It is to nurture our relationship with Jesus. This is the discipleship to which he calls us: it is abiding in him, keeping company with him, living in daily conversation with him. We are called to a life-long process of entering ever more deeply into this relationship with him, learning to abide in his love, and learning to love one another as God has loved us. It is learning to live like that every day!

And, in the process, we will gradually come to better see the world, ourselves, other people, and whatever situations we face with our hearts and minds attuned to his.

Anne Hunt
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