



Throughout the Old Testament, we read the metaphor of the vineyard in reference to the nation of Israel, God's chosen people (Isaiah 5: 1-7). In our gospel reflection today we will read Jesus transforming the Old Testament symbolism of the vineyard by emphasizing Himself as the *true vine*, planted on earth among us through the Incarnation. Christ Jesus deepens this metaphor towards community whose foundation is to be found within the unity of the apparent diversity of the Trinity and us as the branches, each blessed with unique charisms to use towards building the Kingdom in community through God.

In a comfortable position in your prayer space, take a moment to quiet your interior. Become aware of God's presence, offer this time to God and open yourself to the working of the Holy Spirit.

After a gesture of reverence to our Lord, open with a Prayer of your choice.

You may wish to pray for a specific grace or simply pray for the grace that our Lord open your heart and mind to receive the grace he wishes to bless you with today.

Prayerfully read the following passage from John 15: 1-17. Spend some time reflecting on any words or interior movements, which resound in you. You may wish to include a colloquy in your prayer. Write these initial responses in your journal or the space below.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me; and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Initial Responses:

part. Where do you find yourself within her words? How has our Lord uniquely blessed you for the purpose of continuing Christ's mission in our lives?

I often asked myself why God had preferences, why all souls did not receive an equal measure of grace ...

Our Lord has deigned to explain this mystery to me. He showed me the book of nature, and I understood that every flower created by Him is beautiful, that the brilliance of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not lessen the perfume of the violet or the sweet simplicity of the daisy

...

And so it is in the world of souls, Our Lord's living garden ...

I understood this also, that God's Love is made manifest as well in a simple soul which does not resist His grace as in one more highly endowed ...

As the sun shines both on the cedar and on the floweret, so the Divine Sun illumines every soul, great and small, and all correspond to His care – just as in nature the seasons are so disposed that on the appointed day the humblest daisy shall unfold its petals.

Spend a moment to bring all your reflection together. Consider the generosity of gifts given to you by God and how those gifts are brought together with the SJC community.

Close your prayer in an offering of gratitude

