

Formed in Prayer



Let us be still and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us

Dear Father,
Be with us as we pray.
Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel.
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.
Send your Holy Spirit to inspire
and sustain us in our mission.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Gospel

John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more.

You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it.

It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.'

What words or phrases struck you in Sunday's Gospel reading? What might God be saying to you in and through the Gospel?

Reflection

There's a great saying on a local cafe wall which reads, 'Life without coffee is like ... something without something ... sorry, I haven't had any coffee yet.' Sunday's Gospel asks me, "Would life cut off from Jesus for you be "like something without something"? The Gospel begs the question, 'What does it mean to live in Jesus; to make my home in Jesus?'

I can still be a little flustered when a café barister asks, 'Can I have a name to go with the order?' I share my first name a little reluctantly. Perhaps because knowing my surname tells you far more about who I am because it tells you who I am related to, the people who bring me joy, who care deeply for me, whose welfare I place before my own. Despite owning an iPhone, an iPad and an @me.com email address I can be subtly drawn into a worldview that fails to see the 'we' in 'I' and the 'us' in 'me', indeed the catholicity within our DNA.

As leaders, we need to be constantly checking whether we are acting in accord with the belief that we can do nothing apart from Christ, bear no great fruit apart from Christ and others who work and minister with us the vine, the Body of Christ. There's a humility required to receive a grace that can transform the experience and fruits of leadership from what I imagine I might do alone to what we can do together through Christ and with the Holy Spirit for the coming of the Kingdom at the heart of the Good News. *(Greg Wilson, CSYMA Board)*

Jesus

You are the Vine

We are the branches

Come live in us, fill us with sap of your life and love.

Come make your home in our community

That we might bear fruit for the life of the world

Send your Word to prune us, to remain with us

As your disciples, to the glory of God the Father

Amen.