

- Do you see the sacraments as opportunities to experience the intimate love of Christ?
- How does your faith help strengthen and heal your relationships with other people?
- In what ways are you aware of being commissioned by Jesus Christ to go out and bear fruit? How are you responding to this call?

*Spend some time sharing your reflections as a group.*



## Getting to know Jesus Christ



### Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
we proclaim you as the True Vine  
and we thank you for your great love for us.  
By the gift of your grace  
help us always to remain in your love,  
that we may bear fruit in plenty,  
to the glory of the Father.  
Amen.

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## 8. *I am the Vine*

# *I am the Vine*

John 15:1

## **Introduction**

In the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of John Jesus refers to himself at the Vine. Jesus makes clear that just as a branch must remain part of the vine, so the disciples must remain united with him in order to share his life. Jesus is speaking these words to his disciples before his passion and death, encouraging them to remain in his love. He makes clear that it is only by remaining one with him, the True Vine, that the disciples can live fruitful lives.

## **Reflecting on Our Experience**

This image of the vine and its branches reminds us that we are called together as Christ's disciples. By being part of the vine each branch is also united with all the other branches. Jesus calls us, then, to be a community, a people, a family united to him and to each other. When that unity is damaged or broken in any way we can't experience life as God intends us to, just as the branch cannot bear fruit if it is separated from the vine. Think of times when you have experienced unity or disunity in your family, among your friends or at work. What was this like? How important is unity in your personal experience of relationships?



## **Listening to Scripture**

Choose one or more of the following Scripture passages to read and reflect on.

John 15:1-9 — *I am the vine, you are the branches*

Galatians 5:22-23 — *The fruit of the Spirit*

Psalms 1 — *The blessed are like a tree bearing fruit in season*

Luke 6:42-44 — *Every tree can be told by its own fruit*

Romans 12:5 — *In Christ we are all joined to one another*

John 15:16-17 — *I commissioned you to go out and bear fruit*

## **Reflecting and Sharing**

By using this image of a vine and its branches Jesus is pointing to the intimate communion between him and his followers. Jesus could not call us to a greater and more loving intimacy; he has shown the depth of his love by shedding his precious blood for us on the cross. In his great love Jesus continues to call us into that intimate communion, especially through the sacraments. Through faith and baptism we enter into the community of the Church. Jesus then offers us the gift of communion with himself, and our sisters and brothers in Christ, in the most special and profound way in the Eucharist.

*We now listen to a personal faith sharing where a catechist shares how they have known Jesus as the Vine.*

- How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ? Is it close?
- In what ways have you experienced fellowship, or communion, with other Christians?