

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

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.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

Almighty ever-living God,  
constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery  
within us,  
that those you were pleased to make new in  
Holy Baptism  
may, under your protective care, bear much  
fruit  
and come to the joys of life eternal.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING**

Acts 9:26-31

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.  
When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to  
join the disciples, but they were all afraid  
of him: they could not believe he was really  
a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge  
of him, introduced him to the apostles, and  
explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul  
and spoken to him on his journey, and how he  
had preached boldly at Damascus in the name  
of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with  
them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in  
the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken  
to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they  
became determined to kill him. When the  
brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea and  
sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee  
and Samaria were now left in peace, building  
themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and  
filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 21

Response:

You, Lord, are my praise in the great  
assembly.

or  
Alleluia!

1. 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.)

2. 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.)

3. 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.)

**SECOND READING**

1 John 3:18-24

A reading from the first letter of St John.

My children,  
our love is not to be just words or mere talk,  
but something real and active;  
only by this can we be certain  
that we are the children of the truth  
and be able to quieten our conscience in his  
presence,  
whatever accusations it may raise against us,  
because God is greater than our conscience  
and he knows everything.  
My dear people,  
if we cannot be condemned by our  
conscience,  
we need not be afraid in God's presence,  
and whatever we ask him,  
we shall receive,  
because we keep his commandments  
and live the kind of life that he wants.  
His commandments are these:  
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus  
Christ  
and that we love one another  
as he told us to.  
Whoever keeps his commandments  
lives in God and God lives in him.  
We know that he lives in us  
by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Make your home in me, as I make mine in  
you.  
Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

John 15:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to  
John.

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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

(all bow during the next two lines)

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living  
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O God, who by the wonderful exchange  
effected in this sacrifice  
have made us partakers of the one supreme  
Godhead,  
grant, we pray,  
that, as we have come to know your truth,  
we may make it ours by a worthy way of life.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

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.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Graciously be present to your people, we  
pray, O Lord,  
and lead those you have imbued with  
heavenly mysteries  
to pass from former ways to newness of life.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**THE WORD**

In the Gospel reading today, Jesus describes himself as the true vine for his disciples. The one tending the vine is the Father. The plant is not decorative: its purpose is to produce fruit and for this to happen a certain amount of pruning has to take place.

The instrument for this task is the word which the disciples whom Jesus is addressing have accepted and are therefore already cleansed or pruned and in a fit condition to be productive. But, as with any growing plant, care has to be taken that this healthy state is maintained, so "remaining" (or "abiding") in Jesus is vital. The image of the vine is especially appropriate, as it suggests the intimate flow of life from the trunk into the branches: if this communication is interrupted or impeded, the branch will wither and lose its reason for being part of the plant. If the disciples remain in Jesus and his words remain in them, then the positive result is that whatever they ask, the Father will grant.

This passage warns against any sense of complacency: the image of the living vine suggests more than a passive attitude towards Jesus, that being his disciple is proved by bearing much fruit, which will redound to the glory of the Father, another strong theme in the Fourth Gospel. It is the word of Jesus which gives life to the disciple, and it is the mutual love of the disciples which will reveal them as disciples of Jesus, to the glory of the Father. ■

**REFLECT**

There is no scene in John's Gospel of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. The Eucharistic text is usually identified as the feeding of the crowd of five thousand, which only concerns the bread. Some scholars suggest that the passage on Jesus as the true vine provides the teaching on the Eucharistic wine. Whatever the merits of such arguments, there is an interesting lesson in the idea of communicating life.

The importance of the branch being properly joined to the trunk is

unquestionable: the stem is the source of the branch's life. In the New Testament tradition of the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus speaks about "the cup of my blood". In biblical thought, the blood is where the life principle of a person or animal is to be found. When we speak of Jesus "shedding his blood" on the cross, we really mean that Jesus "gave his life": the sacramentally consecrated wine is a very powerful way in which the risen Jesus communicates his life to his disciples and makes sense, if we think about it in the context of the vine

**SAY**

Whoever remains in me...  
bears fruit in plenty.  
(John 15:5)

**LEARN**

The image of the vine or vineyard is used in the Hebrew scriptures as a symbol for the people of Israel.

The life principle of the creature is in the blood (Leviticus 17:14).

Jesus "shedding his blood" really means that Jesus "gave his life" for us.

**DO**

Buy a bunch of grapes. Take some time at home to contemplate them in the context of Jesus' teaching about the vine and the branches. Then enjoy them!



providing life-giving nourishment to the branches: this enables them to bear the grapes, which then produce wine.

One of the most important reforms of the Second Vatican Council was the restoring of the chalice to the laity: as Jesus commanded, "drink of it, all of you". Perhaps we might reflect that it is one way in which the Lord communicates his life to us. ■