

May 2, 2021

5th Sunday of Easter

We are the branches

“I am the vine, you are the branches.” – John 15:5

Many of us are concerned about energy these days. Scientists and engineers are constantly working to find cleaner and more efficient sources of energy. We see gas prices on the rise. When that happens, we may consider purchasing a car that gets better gas mileage or a hybrid. Same with air-conditioners and many appliances. Over time they become less efficient and more costly to operate, so you consider replacing them. So how does this energy talk go with this week's Gospel from John, where Jesus says, “I am the vine, you are the branches?”

Jesus explains that we are part of Him by using the imagery of a vine, branches, and a vine grower. A vine must have branches to grow and prosper. We are the branches. We cannot reach our best potential without Jesus, the vine, to help us grow. The vine needs plenty of sunlight, water, and good soil to grow. But if there are branches that sap the energy from the rest of the plant, then the vine grower will cut it down and destroy it.

For us to grow spiritually we need prayer, study, and action. We must give God our praise and prayer by opening our hearts and minds to Him. We study scripture to grow in wisdom and understanding. We put our faith into action by helping our neighbors and community. By these things, we produce good fruit for the body of Christ, the Church. If we fall short in these areas, then we are not producing the fruits the God wants from us. We become useless, preventing the plant from growing and flourishing. We can suffer spiritually and emotionally, potentially dragging others down with us. We need to strive for growth and

produce the best we can for the good of the Kingdom, our community and ourselves.

Our energy comes through the Holy Spirit working within us. We must persevere in study, prayer and action by ***Courageously Living the Gospel*** at home, at work and in our community.

- Bishop Gregory Parkes