

## I am the Vine. You are the Branches: (John 15:1-8)

Homily by Fr. Justin Trinidad

Last week, Fr. Paul shared how the astronaut Buzz Aldrin brought the Communion elements of bread and wine to the moon. Let me explain a little more on that event.

The lunar module Eagle, carrying the astronauts, Buzz Aldrin, and Neil Armstrong landed on the moon on July 20, 1969. Mike Collins stayed in the orbiting spacecraft. While Armstrong prepared for his moonwalk, Aldrin unpacked the Eucharistic presence; the bread and wine and put them on the abort guidance systems computer. He describes what he did next.

"I poured the wine into the chalice...in the one-sixth gravity of the moon, the wine culled slowly and gracefully up the side of the cup. It was interesting to think that the very first liquid ever poured on the moon and the very first element eaten there were communion elements."

Aldrin read passages from the Scriptures. One of the one's he chose was according to the Gospel of John: "I am the vine and you are the branches. Whoever remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit, for you can do nothing without Me."

Alone on the moon, while partaking of holy communion, Aldrin commented, "I sense especially strongly my unity with my church at home and the Church everywhere."

This story gives a real meaning to how we, the branches, remain one with Jesus, the vine.

How are we united with Jesus? There are so many way that we can be united with Jesus. I will mention four ways in particular, which are practical expressions of this union: by gathering in Jesus name, by listening and pondering His Word, by partaking His Body and Blood, and by living a life of charity and service according to the example of Christ.

When we gather in the name of Jesus, we have the promise that Jesus is in our midst. Jesus proclaimed, "Where two or three are coming together in my name, I am there with them." (Matthew 18:20)

When we read, listen and ponder on the Gospel, when we hear the Gospel explained, we listen to Jesus. Jesus told his disciples, "Whoever listens to you, listens to me." (Luke 10:16)

When we partake of the Lord's Supper, we have the promise of Jesus that He is with us. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I in him." (John 6:56)

Finally, when we live a life of charity and service, Jesus has these words, "When you do it to the least my brethren, you do it unto me."

If there is one desire the Lord has for us, it is to unite us with the Father through Him. Thus, Jesus became one of us. In addition, through His death and resurrection, we find access to this union. It is the prayer of Jesus, "Father, may they all be one. May they be one in us, as you are in me, and I am in you. Like the vine and the branches, Jesus desires to be one with you and me, not just at the end of our life, but today, at this very moment Do we desire this union with Jesus, the same way he does?"

Let us pray:

Lord, you are the vine and we are the branches. As the branches draw life from the vine, may we only draw life from you. May we always be united with you by gathering in your name, by listening to you Word, by partaking of Your Body and Blood, and by making our lives the experience of Your charity and service.

When we get distracted and lukewarm, infuse us with Your very life. Mother of God, angels and saints, by your prayers and examples, please help us.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

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