

Children's liturgy – Fifth Sunday of Easter (Year B)

Preparing the worship space

Colour: white

Props: A bunch of grapes

Song suggestions: I am the vine, you are the branches (273, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

You are the vine (824, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

Welcome: Today we hear how Jesus is the vine and how he gives life to us, his branches. Let's think a bit about what that means today.

Opening prayer: Dear Lord, you are the vine, we are the branches. Help us to bear your fruit and follow your word. Amen.

First reading (optional): Acts 9:26-31

Psalm: Ps 21:26-28, 30-32 r. 26

Gospel acclamation: *everyone stands and sings together.*

Gospel: John 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I am the real vine, and my Father is the gardener. He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit. You have been made clean already by the teaching I have given you. Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

"I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown out like a branch and dries up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where they are burnt. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it. My Father's glory is shown by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples."

(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below)*

Gospel reflection: What do you remember from the reading you heard today?

Jesus is teaching his disciples. He calls himself the "true vine". Do you know what a vine is?

What grows on a vine? Grapes grow on vines. *(Hold up a bunch of grapes to the children.)* Do you like grapes?

Jesus calls us his branches because he supports us, like a tree trunk supports its branches. And he wants us to bear fruit for him.

What do you think this means? Do you think he wants us to grow grapes?!

What Jesus means is that he wants us to stay close to him and follow his teachings. This means being the best we can be, loving each other, and loving the beautiful world he has given us.

But this world is changing. Because we humans have treated the planet badly, our climate is heating up. And the hotter it gets, the more we see big weather disasters like storms or droughts – when there is no rain and everything dries up like the vine we heard about in today's gospel.

Everyone is affected, but the poorest people suffer the most.

Florence is from a country in Africa called Zimbabwe. Here many people rely for food on what they can grow. The rain is not coming when it should anymore, so it is very hard for Florence's parents to grow crops. People are going hungry and thirsty.

How would you feel if you had hardly anything to eat or drink?

We all have a part to play to protect our world, so that it stays a beautiful place for us all to live in safely.

There are many ways that we can show love for our neighbour and care for our world. Can you think of some, so that you will be like the strong, healthy branches on the vine that Jesus talks about?

Intercessions: *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

We know that Jesus is the true vine always supporting us, his branches. Let us keep this in mind as we pray together.

We pray for the Church throughout the world: that it may follow Christ's example and show love and welcome to all people. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for all those who have been badly affected by the changing climate; may we always show care for our planet and not damage it any more. Lord, in your mercy...

We pray for our parish, family and friends: that we may be moved to show love for our neighbours, both here and around the world. Lord, in your mercy...

Closing prayer: Generous God, support us in all that we do as a vine supports its branches, and help us to support and share with others around the world. Amen.

For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy

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Activity suggestions

Invite the children to complete the accompanying activity sheet.

Remind the children to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today. Encourage them to remember their task of caring for the earth each time they eat a piece of fruit this week.

*Gospel passage taken from:

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