

Day 7: Growing in Unity: "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5a)

Scripture (see readings over the page)

- 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:21-23, Is Christ divided?
- John 17:20-23, As you and I are one

Meditation

On the eve of his death, Jesus prayed for the unity of those the Father gave him: "that they may all be one... so that the world may believe." Joined to him, as a branch is to the vine, we share the same sap that circulates among us and vitalizes us.

Each tradition seeks to lead us to the heart of our faith: communion with God, through Christ, in the Spirit. The more we live this communion, the more we are connected to other Christians and to all of humanity. Paul warns us against an attitude that had already threatened the unity of the first Christians: absolutizing one's own tradition to the detriment of the unity of the body of Christ. Differences then become divisive instead of mutually enriching. Paul had a very broad vision: "All are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God." (1 Corinthians 3:22-23)

Christ's will commits us to a path of unity and reconciliation. It also commits us to unite our prayer to his: "that they may all be one... so that the world may believe." (John 17:21)



Prayer

Holy Spirit, vivifying fire and gentle breath, come and abide in us. Renew in us the passion for unity so that we may live in awareness of the bond that unites us in you. May all who have put on Christ at their Baptism unite and bear witness together to the hope that sustains them. Amen.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Divisions in the Church

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you should be in agreement and that there should be no divisions among you, but that you should be united in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Cephas', or 'I belong to Christ.' ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 3:21-23

²¹ So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all belong to you, ²³ and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

John 17:20-23

²⁰ 'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.