

S E P S



SERVE - TITHE - ENGAGE

PRACTICE - SHARE



I am the Vine

For those of us who garden, we know there are all kinds of variables that affect how fruitful each plant is. Sunlight, wind direction, amount of water, soil quality, the presence of particular bugs, etc. We know there are many ways to care for plants. Pruning, stakes to provide security, planting complementary plants around it, weeding, thinning, etc.

Like with all plants there are special techniques to growing fruitful grapevines. Much of it has to do with climate; it must be just hot enough and just cold enough. They can be a bit of a finicky plant.

One interesting thing about grapevines though is that the more damaged they are, the more fruit they produce. When they have been battered by the weather or pruned severely they have to recover. In this recovery, they become stronger and are able to bear more fruit. However, if at any point they are detached from the vine, and remain that way, the branch will wither and die.

How similar it is with us.

We experience heartbreak, difficulty, brokenness; things batter us. Sometimes it feels like things are being stripped away, like we are being pruned. These times in life have are certainly difficult and have a way of changing us. But they also have the potential to strengthen us and cause great fruit to be born in our lives.

Yet, this only happens if during it all we stay connected to the vine. If we stay close to Jesus. If we remain in Him, as He remains in us.

While it is simple to say that, it is not quite that easy. It requires faith to trust Jesus when life is uncertain. It takes hope to believe that fruit will come when things seem barren. It takes perseverance to keep praying even when it seems like our prayers aren't being heard.

Just like the vine provides all the branch needs, Jesus provides all these things for us. He puts Himself in a position to serve and support us, giving the graces required to face the circumstances of our lives. Without this gift of grace and a connection to The Vine, the fruit we are promised will not be born. We need Jesus and He is so willing to help and love us.

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." John 15:4

WHEN THE BRANCH IS BROKEN

THE ROAD HOME

Do you have a place that you know when you walk in you'll feel known? Or already accepted?

Maybe it's a place where everyone knows your name ("NORM!") - a gym, the local bar, the country club, an after-school club, your parent's house, or a friend's place. How difficult it has been this past year having to be away from these places.

For many, this place was our parish. Small groups, Sunday Mass, That Man Is You, Walking With Purpose, service ministries, youth ministry. All these places within our parish that people called home because they knew that there, they were known, loved, and accepted.

As we anticipate the world opening up a little, we want to prepare our parish for the return to it. Who will start walking the road home.

When you prepare your home for guests there is typically cleaning involved, usually cooking, and perhaps even some rearranging of furniture. As we anticipate visitors, the spirit of preparation will be quite similar! Those of us who call St. Norbert home will create a space for those returning to come home to.

A space in which each person is known and loved. Where they feel welcome and like they belong. We hope to create a space that reflects the heart of Jesus, but through our face and hands.

The staff of St. Norbert is not foolish enough to think this is something we can do on our own. We know that people are the soul of a community; that YOU give it this soul. Because we know this, we're not going to prepare our parish for those returning to Mass without you.

On Tuesday, May 18 we'll be starting these preparations by praying together. **The Road Home: A Night to Receive and Rebuild** will be time for you to take in Jesus' love during Adoration and return that love by rebuilding St. Norbert with us as a living stone. We hope you'll join us.



"A COMMUNITY
NEEDS A SOUL
IF IT IS TO
BECOME A
TRUE HOME
FOR HUMAN
BEINGS. YOU,
THE PEOPLE
MUST GIVE IT
THIS SOUL!"

**POPE ST. JOHN
PAUL II**

**THE ROAD HOME:
A NIGHT TO RECEIVE AND REBUILD**

**TUESDAY
MAY 18TH
7:00 - 8:00PM**