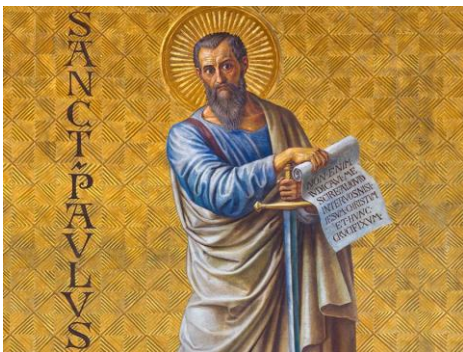
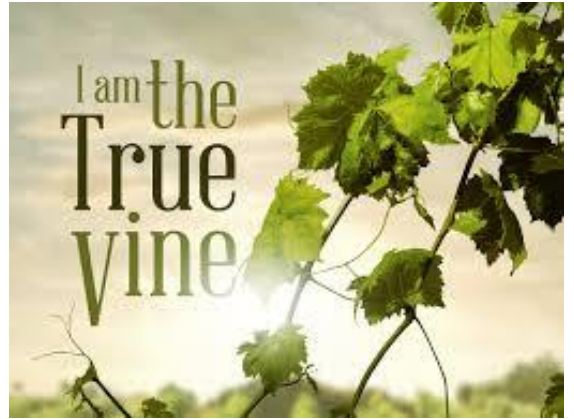


On the Vine: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fifth Sunday of Easter

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us that He is the true vine that God intended Israel to be—the source of divine life and wisdom for the nations (see [Sirach 24:17–24](#)). In Baptism, each of us was joined to Him by the Holy Spirit. As a branch grows from a tree, our souls are to draw life from Him, nourished by His word and the Eucharist.



Paul in today's First Reading seeks to be grafted onto the visible expression of Christ the true vine—His Church. Once the chief persecutor of the Church, Paul encounters initial resistance and suspicion. But he is known by his fruits, by his powerful witness to the Lord working in his life (see [Matthew 7:16–20](#)).

We too are commanded today to bear good fruits as His disciples so that our lives give glory to God. Like Paul's life, our lives must bear witness to His goodness. Jesus cautions us, however, that if we're bearing fruit, we can expect that God will "prune" us—as a gardener trims and cuts back a plant so that it will grow stronger and bear even more fruit. He is teaching us today how to look at our sufferings and trials with the eyes of faith.



We need to see our struggles as pruning, by which we are being disciplined and trained so that we can grow in holiness and bear fruits of righteousness (see [Hebrews 12:4–11](#)). We need to always remain rooted in Him, as today's Epistle tells us. We remain in Him by keeping His commandment of love, by pondering His words, letting them dwell richly in us (see [Colossians 3:16](#)), and by always seeking to do what pleases Him. In everything we must be guided by humility, remembering that apart from Him we can do nothing. As we sing in today's Psalm, we must fulfil our vows, turning to the Lord in worship, proclaiming his praises, until all families come to know His justice in their lives.

