

I AM...

This Sunday, April 28th, the Fifth Sunday of Easter, has another passage from the NT book of John as our Gospel text (John 15: 1-8). In these verses, Jesus gives the seventh and final declaration of his divine relationship to us. **I AM the Vine**; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5) Jesus says that **I AM** all you need, needed, and will ever need, and explains how to get and keep everything He has promised us.

He started in John 6:35 revealing Himself by saying: "**I AM the Bread**" we need to never perish; then in John 8:12 by declaring: "**I AM the Light**" we need to live. In John 10 He opens to us the truth that He is related to us in two more ways: "**I AM the Door**" we need to enter God's Presence; as well as "**I AM the Good Shepherd**" we need - who loves, leads, gives Himself to care for us. At the grave of His friend Lazarus in John 11:25-27 Jesus tells us that "**I AM the Resurrection Life**" - all that we need to live here and for eternity. As the hymn writers say: "no guilt in life, no fear in death Jesus has set my destiny"! Jesus comforts His troubled disciples in John 14:6 with the three-fold cord that can't be broken as He promises "**I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life.**" The way for today, the truth for tomorrow, and the life for evermore.

In the promise of an "abiding" presence God's Easter people find not some abstract speculation about a distant or imaginary Trinity, but an invitation to experience the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as a saving and liberating presence in the midst of our day-to-day world. The promise of "abiding" in Jesus is not for its own sake, nor an end in itself. Jesus imagines and promises a dynamic and changing life for the disciple community. Vines are pruned and cleansed. Branches that wither and die are removed. This points to a constantly changing community that is called to be up and doing. This is a relationship of purpose and power.

Come and worship and know again, I AM the Great IAM

Worship service with the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday 10 AM