**‘May we be the children of your love’**

Welcome to the Fall session of our SCC groups

**The Vineyard:**

A few themes stand out in our Sunday readings this Fall. As you study the scripture, notice how Jesus uses parables to teach the people about who God is. “The Vineyard” seems to be one of his favorite ways to describe God’s care and protection for us. Given that Jesus’ audience would have understood the importance of grapes and wine in their lives, it makes sense that the vineyard becomes a major Biblical symbol for the people of God.

Just as God cares and tends to the vineyard, his verdant and special creation, God also hopes for the vineyard to flourish and produce good fruit (to reach its full potential in being what God created it to be).

Note the commentary from Fr. Daniel J. Harrington:

*“These three vineyard texts (in the readings for Oct. 8) insist that God remains in personal relationship with his people, continues to care for and preserve them and stays faithful even when the people fail to do so. Thus the vineyard* ***is an image of hope:*** *it emphasizes God’s continuing care for his people.”*

**God’s ways are not our ways:**

And along with hope, we have St. Paul, who talks about peace. It’s a gift, he says, that comes with this relationship. God gives us peace, even when we don’t understand everything that’s happening. We can hold on to whatever is true, honorable, just and lovely, “then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

**The Greatest of these is Love:**

Finally, our readings show us what’s truly important to Jesus: Loving your neighbor as yourself (Oct. 29), humility (Nov. 5), and being prepared and ready in our relationship with God (Oct. 15), so we can respond to God’s abundance with a heartfelt, genuine yes.

***In keeping with this emphasis on love, we are suggesting the following prayer for our focus this season. It’s from St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109):***

*Teach us to love those who hate us; to pray for those who despitefully use us; that we may be the children of your love, our Father. You make the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and send the rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*- St. Anselm*