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Based on the gospel for Sunday 2 May: John 15:1-8

“A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine.”

In one of his best-known books *The Wounded Healer*, the theologian Henri Nouwen describes us as a rootless generation, hopeless people in a dislocated world.

In the gospel we hear how a plant that has been cut off from its roots turns into a lifeless stick. This may sound grim but there is just no way around it. A human being with no sense of belonging or awareness of where they have come from or where they are going to, simply cannot have abundant life.

Another of Nouwen's much-loved books is called *You Are the Beloved*. The title is the very answer to our loneliness, isolation and rootlessness. "The truth," writes Nouwen, "even though I cannot feel it right now, is that I am the chosen child of God, precious in God's eyes, called the Beloved from all eternity, and held safe in an everlasting belief."

This profound truth applies to all of God's children, drawing in those who are cast aside by the world as being of little worth – the poor, the suffering, the forgotten. All are precious, all are part of the living vine.

How do we practise staying aware of our roots and our divine inheritance? We keep reminding ourselves that, in the words of this gospel, Christ is the vine and we are the branches.

Beautiful and glorious Lord,

Fill me with the comfort and hope of knowing that I am your child, precious in your eyes.

In return I offer you all that I am, from my deepest roots to my outstretched arms, as I reach out to my sisters and brothers who are abandoned or forgotten.

In this way may all of us, your children, find abundance of life.

Amen



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This reflection was written by Elena Verigo, a CAFOD volunteer.



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