I am the Vine,

you□ are the branches

a tale of three prepositions



a reflection by Fr. Dennis Gallagher

What's in a preposition? When it comes to understanding the Christian life, quite a bit. Take three of them - for, with, and in - and consider their relative force as each one relates to our relationship to Christ. I will proceed in ascending order.

The preposition "for" suggests a cause to which I give my life. Is it true to say that to become a Christian is to enlist my life in the cause of Christ, to fly under his banner, so to speak? In a qualified sense, I suppose this can be the case. The problem is that my person exists at a certain remove from a cause. It may succeed in stirring up my passion and giving a purposeful direction to my life, but as such it's not so different from any other cause - communism or pacifism or animal rights. Does it suffice to say that as a Christian I have advanced the cause of Christ in the world?

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