

Locally produced for you

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

May 25, 2011

The day before my wedding, I picked up ten cases of table wine from a local winery--and one bottle of sweet wine for communion. The folks at the winery had encountered local-food enthusiasts planning receptions before, but the communion thing seemed to surprise them. "My son always says this tastes just like altar wine!" said the woman who rang me up. "That's great that you're actually going to *use* it for that!"

Opinions vary as to what makes a good communion wine, but the overall quality of the wine itself isn't usually at the top of the list. So even if you're among those who turn their noses up at wine from lesser-known regions--and, judging from the far-flung wine lists at even the most obsessively local-food-oriented restaurants, this is a sizable group--buying local for the Eucharist seems like a great idea.

The Canadian Centre for Ecumenism [is partnering](#) with a nearby vineyard to make this happen in Catholic dioceses across Quebec. Instead of buying altar wine shipped all the way from California, churches in the province will be able to buy a sweet white, relabeled "Vin de messe," directly from Domaine des Côtes d'Ardoise in Dunham, Quebec.

The Quebec effort required the bishop of the vineyard's local diocese to authenticate the wine for sacramental use per canon law. For those of us in denominations that don't limit the types of wine that may be used, this would be even easier to do.

Is anyone doing this already, or has anyone looked into it and decided not to? What would you say are the pros and cons?