

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



Careful Pruning

Dear Father,
as the vine grower,
you have removed
the places where I have withered.
But where I have born fruit,
where I have grown in joy, love,
patience, kindness,
gentleness, and peace,
you have helped me grow,
so that I may continue to bear more fruit.
The fruit I have born comes from
my remaining
in Christ and in his Word.
May I continue to remain in Christ and
bring you to the world.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, May 3, 2015
Remaining in Christ

Today's Readings: Acts 9:26–31; Psalm 22:26–27, 28, 30, 31–32 (26a); 1 John 3:18–24; John 15:1–8. In the First Reading, we see how meeting Christ can change a person's life. Saul had been so involved in the persecution of Christians that the disciples were "afraid of him." But upon meeting Christ along the road, he turned his life over to God, and "spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord." We have met Christ in the word, sacrament, and encounters through the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are called to ask ourselves if we have let these meetings affect us in a way that others would notice. Are you open to the presence of the Lord changing you?

In the Second Reading from the First Letter of John, we read a simplified version of the Commandments. We are to believe in the name of Christ and love one another as he commanded. Through abiding in these commandments, we remain in Christ.

But what does it mean to abide in Christ? What happens to those who remain in him? In today's reading from John's account of the Gospel, Christ explains that those who remain in him bear fruit. We can think of that fruit as the good relationships in our lives, the positive influences that we have had on others, and the ways in which we have helped build community. How do you ensure that you remain in Christ and will bear good fruit?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, May 4, 2015

Growing in Love through the Spirit

In the Last Supper discourse, Jesus speaks of his love for his disciples and the love of his heavenly Father. He promises the disciples consolation through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us to grow in love and knowledge of God, and opens our ears to hear and understand the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is the active transforming agent at work in the Church and in the world. Are we listening attentively to God's Word and the voice of the Spirit? Today's Readings: Acts 14:5-18; Psalm 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16 (1ab); John 14:21-26.

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

The Gift of Peace

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." As we see in today's Gospel, the parting gift of Jesus to his disciples is peace. It is not a peace that we can find in the world; it is a peace that conquers all fears and anxieties. All we need to do is turn ourselves over to God to partake of this peace. When have you felt God's peace? In what ways are you living in the peace of Christ and how do you share that peace with others? Today's Readings: Acts 14:19-28; Psalm 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21 (12); John 14:27-31a.

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

A Choice to Be Faithful

Notice in today's Gospel that Jesus says, "Abide in me as I abide in you." There is no question but that Jesus will remain in us; the only question is whether we will decide to remain within Jesus. It is always our choice. God is faithful to us. Our love needs to be just as constant. Only through such love will we bring forth good fruit. How do you nurture the Word of God within you? Today's Readings: Acts 15:1-6; Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5 (1); John 15:1-8.

Thursday, May 7, 2015

Your Joy May Be Complete

It is interesting to read Jesus' reason for why the disciples should keep the commandments. "I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." Christ wants all good things for the disciples, and so he explains that they only need to follow the commandments. Christ has followed the commands of his Father. Do we think that we are better than that or do we humbly follow the commandments? Today's Readings: Acts 15:7-21; Psalm 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 10 (3); John 15:9-11.

Friday, May 8, 2015

Loving as God Loves

"This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you." The command in today's Gospel is not simple. We are to love each other with the love of the Christ who laid down his life for us. We are called to image God in the world. That means loving as God does, not as we see our fellow human beings model love. How does God's love differ from that which humankind usually shows? How challenging is today's Gospel for you? Today's Readings: Acts 15:22-31; Psalm 57:8-9, 10 and 12 (10a); John 15:12-17.

Saturday, May 9, 2015

Privilege and Responsibility

In today's Gospel, we see the difference knowledge of God makes. Christ tells his disciples that those who will persecute them will do so because "they do not know him who sent me." As Christians, we are privileged that Christ has welcomed us and allowed us to know God. But with that privilege comes responsibility. We need to keep the commandments and spread the Word, allowing others to know Christ. Do you find it hard to keep God's laws when the world is beckoning with its set of rules? Today's Readings: Acts 16:1-10; Psalm 100:1b-2, 3, 5 (2a); John 15:18-21.

