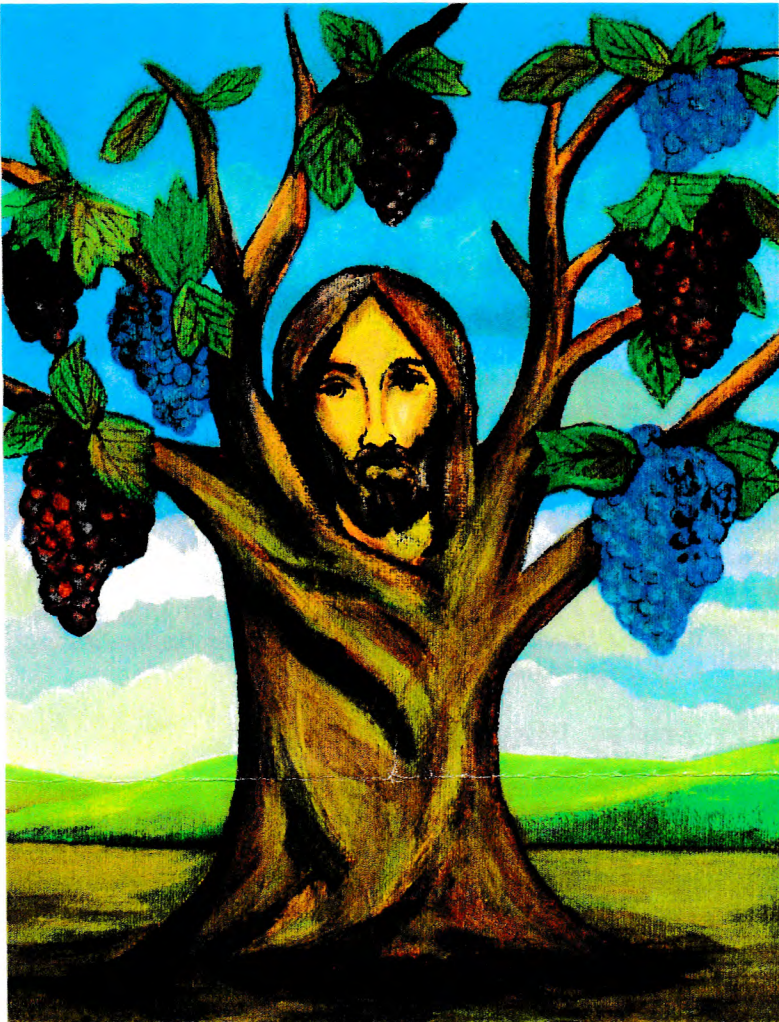


FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



In the Vineyard

God, the giver of joy,
in Baptism you join us to Christ,
the true Vine,
and, through your Word,
we are sustained in holiness
and wisdom.

Send your Holy Spirit upon
your vineyard
so that, each branch may thrive
and reveal your glory by yielding love
and joy.

Sustain the Church in holiness
and help it bear much fruit for
your kingdom.

When our parched hearts begin
to wither,

draw us close to you and nurture us
with your grace.

And on that final day, may we be found
praising your holy name
in the assembly of your people.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 29, 2018

Pruning



Today's Readings: Acts of the Apostles 9:26–31; Psalm 22:26–27, 28, 30, 31–32; 1 John 3:18–24; John 15:1–8. When St. Paul first encountered the Christian community, he was not kind or receptive to their message. His heart was transformed when he finally encounters Christ on the road to Damascus. From that point on, he became a fervent preacher of the Gospel. Like the pruned vine in the Gospel, Paul opened his heart to the Good News and allowed the vine grower to prune away all that was dead and did not bear fruit. The Word, which called out to him in Damascus, broke open his heart and won him over. When has the proclaimed Word at Mass deepened your love for Christ and stirred you from your pew to share the Gospel?

After our Lenten journey, we, like Paul, have opened ourselves to God's mercy; the dead branches have been pruned so that we might bear fruit. Paul and the other disciples went about preaching and building up the Kingdom. We have to ask ourselves, what does it look like in our time to be heralds of Good News? Through prayer, the celebration of the Eucharist, and good works, we remain connected to the Vine and grow in holiness. This holiness, this life in the Holy Spirit, helps us see the poor, assists us in reaching out to the places where the Gospel is silenced, and enables us to love. Peruse a hymnal at the parish and pray with a song in the discipleship or mission section that grabs your heart. What do you hear?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, April 30

Idols

It can be easy to get caught in the fame of a sports figure or celebrity and forget that Jesus is the true Savior. In the First Reading, Paul and Barnabas are misidentified as the gods Zeus and Hermes. Their words were so captivating that the people couldn't hear the real message and began to honor them as gods. Quickly they admonished this action. How do we keep our eyes on the prize, especially when we hear so many "good" messages? Today, pray for all who are in positions of power that they might use their status for good and lead others to right living. *Today's Readings: Acts 14:5-18; Psalm 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16; John 14:21-26.*

Tuesday, May 1

Make Known

As members of the Body of Christ, our lives proclaim the goodness of God's mercy and compassion. Through our actions and words, we make known the splendor of God and teach others about Christ. The Psalm reminds us that we are God's friends whose mouths must speak his praise. How do you offer praise to God, especially when the Good News is not welcomed? Think of a concrete way you might share the Gospel today. *Today's Readings: Acts 14:19-28; Psalm 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21; John 14:27-31a.*

Wednesday, May 2

Memorial of St. Athanasius

Today, the Church remembers St. Athanasius, who was bishop of Alexandria in the fourth century. He is an important figure and doctor of the Church because he staunchly fought against the Arian heresy, which denied Christ's divinity. He was met with much opposition, but fervently taught the faith, especially the Incarnation. *Today's Readings: Acts 15:1-6; Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5; John 15:1-8.*

Thursday, May 3

Feast of Sts. Philip and James

The two Apostles we commemorate today remind us that we are called to holiness. Both were members of the original Twelve who followed Jesus. Through their ministry, they led others to encounter Christ. Philip, as we see in today's Gospel, took a long time to realize who Jesus was. There is not much known about James the Lesser, but tradition tells us that he is the author of the Letter of James and was the bishop of Jerusalem. Philip and James are the patrons of Uruguay. Honor these saints by praying for Uruguayans. *Today's Readings: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Psalm 19:2-3, 4-5; John 14:6-14.*

Friday, May 4

Love One Another

As we near the end of the Easter season, John's Gospel account reminds us that Jesus' death was the ultimate gift of love. Jesus commands his followers to love as he loves. This is not easy to do. Jesus was filled with compassion for the poor and marginalized. He revealed the undying and unbiased love God has for his children. Spend time meditating on Jesus' words, "Love one another as I have loved you." *Today's Readings: Acts 15:22-31; Psalm 57:8-9, 10 and 12; John 15:12-17.*

Saturday, May 5

The World

In the Gospel, Jesus states, "You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." At Baptism, we were adopted as children of God and belong totally to God. We live in the world and our living helps make known the presence of Christ. As Christians, we are called to be radical witnesses of God's truth and love. This message, especially when it contradicts worldly ideals, is not always welcome. Make notes of ways you might help foster love with those you encounter. *Today's Readings: Acts 16:1-10; Psalm 100:1b-2, 3, 5; John 15:18-21.*



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Keeping the Seasons

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