

# FAITH FOR SUNDAY

April 28, 2024 Year B  
Fifth Sunday of Easter



## OPENING PRAYER

**+In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen**

Father God, thank you for this time with you. May the Holy Spirit be upon me, that I may receive wisdom from your Word, be open to Your holy Will and give glory to You always. Through Christ our Lord, Amen  
Our Father + Hail Mary + Glory Be

## LECTIO DIVINA

Invite the Holy Spirit - Read - Reflect - Respond in Prayer - Rest in Silence

### **Gospel: John 15:1-8**

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

Last week we heard Jesus identify himself as the Good Shepard; this week, He says plainly, "I AM the true vine". He is the source of everything and suggests that there is fruitfulness expected from us. As a disciple of Christ, we have a role to play as the branches. What does it mean to remain in Him? This is more than just a passive existence - we are invited to have a relationship with the Father and the Son. Our vocation is to demonstrate fruitful love. In what ways have you seen this in your own life? In what ways have you allowed the Lord to prune you and make you more fruitful? How has your faith life been when you did not feel connected to the Vine?

### **Reading I: Acts 9:26-31**

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. Then Barnabas took charge of him and brought him to the apostles, and he reported to them how he had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. He moved about freely with them in Jerusalem, and spoke out boldly in the name of the Lord. He also spoke and debated with the Hellenists, but they tried to kill him. And when the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him on his way to Tarsus. The church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria was at peace. It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit it grew in numbers.

This week's reading is a call to action. Understanding the Easter events, learning about Jesus, the Father and the role in community, it is time to bear fruit. Saul/Paul was feared at first. How do you feel about someone with bold faith who comes into your faith community? What would cause you to change your belief that this person came in the name of Jesus?

# Notes

## **RESPONSORIAL PSALM RESPONSE: I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people**

### **Reading II: 1 John 3:18-24**

Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth. Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts before him in whatever our hearts condemn, for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit he gave us.

The Gospel's primary message is that we should love one another. We are encouraged to embrace a life of fruitful love expressed in deeds. How can we love our neighbor the way Jesus loves us? Fruitful love when given to one may be planted in the life of another. In what ways have you seen the fruits of your love sown beyond the person you gave it to?

### **Feast days this week**

**SUNDAY 28 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
**MONDAY 29 ST CATHERINE OF SIENA, MEMORIAL**  
**TUESDAY 30 EASTER WEEKDAY**  
**WEDNESDAY MAY 1 EASTER WEEKDAY**  
**THURSDAY 2 ST. ATHANASIUS, MEMORIAL**  
**FRIDAY 3 STS. PHILIP AND JAMES, FEAST**  
**SATURDAY 4 EASTER WEEKDAY**

*reflect*

What kinds of fruit have I produced for the kingdom of God?

*pray*

Father God, help me to bear fruit in my actions and words.  
Through Christ our Lord,  
Amen

*live*

Sow seeds of love, mercy and friendship.