

GOSPEL

Jn 15: 1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

All who live in me, and I in them, bear much fruit.

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘I am the true vine,
and my Father is the vinedresser.
Every branch in me that bears no fruit
he cuts away,
and every branch that does bear fruit he
prunes
to make it bear even more.
You are pruned already,
by means of the word that I have spoken to
you.
Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.
As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,
but must remain part of the vine,
neither can you unless you remain in me.
I am the vine,
you are the branches.
Whoever remains in me, with me in him,
bears fruit in plenty;
for cut off from me you can do nothing.
Anyone who does not remain in me
is like a branch that has been thrown away
– he withers;
these branches are collected and thrown on
the fire,
and they are burnt.
If you remain in me
and my words remain in you,
you may ask what you will
and you shall get it.
It is to the glory of my Father that you
should bear much fruit,
and then you will be my disciples.’

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER / B

28 APRIL 2024

‘MAKE YOUR HOME IN ME’

The juxtaposition of the story of Saul (Paul) in the first reading from Acts with the image of Jesus as the vine in the Gospel speaks to the formation of disciples of Jesus. In Acts we have a glimpse into the beginnings of Saul’s (not yet called Paul) ministry who, with all the zeal of his experience of the risen Christ, joins the believers. Barnabas takes him under his wing. Trouble erupts with the Hellenists and Paul is whisked away from Jerusalem to his hometown to where he contemplates his call.

When we then hear the Gospel’s beautifully elegant description of the vine and the branches we can connect with the formation of the disciples and discern our own call. The clear instruction is ‘to make your home in me’, to make our home in Jesus. It is a symbiotic relationship just like the vine and its branches. We need to remain/abide in Jesus to bear fruit. No matter our zeal, our life of faith and ministry grows and flows from Jesus. This is further enriched by the words of the second reading from the First Letter of John where we hear that ‘our love is not to be just words or mere talk but something real and active’. We are to live the life God wants, to love one another and live in God.

Vines and their fruit are no stranger to us here in Australia, so we take time to reflect on this image to see how closely we abide in Jesus the vine.

Dr Rosemary Canavan

FIRST READING

Acts 9: 26-31

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

He explained how the Lord appeared to Saul and spoke to him on his journey.

When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

RESP PSALM

Ps 21: 26-28, 30-32. R. v. 26

R. I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people. (or Alleluia!)

1. My vows I will pay before those who fear him. / The poor shall eat and shall have their fill. / They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him. / May their hearts live for ever and ever! **R.**

2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, / all families of the nations worship before him. / They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; / before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. **R.**

3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him. / They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, / declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn: / ‘These things the Lord has done.’ **R.**



SECOND READING

1 Jn 3: 18-24

A reading from the first letter of St John.

His commandments are these: that we believe and that we love one another.

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are the children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything. My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our conscience, we need not be afraid in God’s presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 15: 4-5

Alleluia, alleluia! / Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; / my branches bear much fruit. / Alleluia!

