



3 May 2015

5th Sunday of Easter

Year B

## STAY CONNECTED

“I am the vine, you are the branches,” Jesus tells us in today’s Gospel. This is not a way of speaking but a wonderful reality, for at our baptism we have been grafted onto him. It is thanks to our deep union with Jesus that we can enjoy God’s salvation and produce the fruits worthy of our new life in him.

Jesus’ statement that “apart from him we can do nothing” may hurt our pride, but it is the sober truth. Only those who accept it in all humility and live accordingly can experience the joy of being God’s children, and are in the best position to produce an abundance of fruits unto eternal life.



### INTRODUCTORY RITES



#### Entrance Antiphon

*(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)*

**O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.**

#### Greeting

**P** –The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all!  
**All**–**And with your spirit!**

#### Penitential Act

**P** –As we prepare to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries, let us call to mind our sins and realize that they prevent us from bearing fruit in our spiritual life. *(Pause)*

**P** –Lord Jesus, you are greater than our hearts and all is known to you. Lord, have mercy!  
**All**–**Lord, have mercy!**

**P** –Lord Jesus, those who keep your commandments re-

main in you and you in them. Christ, have mercy!

**All**–**Christ, have mercy!**

**P** –Lord Jesus, you are the vine and we are the branches. Lord, have mercy!

**All**–**Lord, have mercy!**

**P** –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All**–**Amen!**

#### Gloria

**All**–Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus

Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen!

#### Collect *(Opening Prayer)*

**P** –Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism may, under your protective care, bear much fruit and come to the joys of life eternal.

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.

**All**–**Amen!**

### LITURGY OF THE WORD



**1st Reading**      *Acts 9:26-31*  
*After his conversion, Paul did not have an easy life, but the Lord watched over him, as we learn from the passage we are about to hear proclaimed.*

**R** –A proclamation from the Acts of the Apostles

**When Saul arrived in Jerusalem he tried to join the dis-**

ciples, 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.

Saul 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.

The Word of the Lord!

All—Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22

R —*I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people!*

R. M. Velez



I will praise you, Lord, in the as-



sembly of your peo-ple!

\* I will fulfill my vows before those who fear the Lord. The lowly shall eat their fill. They who seek the Lord shall praise him: "May your hearts live forever!" R.

\* All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord. All the families of the nations shall bow down before him. R.

\* To him alone shall bow down all who sleep in the earth. Before him shall bend all who go down into the dust. R.

\* And to him my soul shall live. My descendants shall serve him. Let the coming generation be told of the Lord, that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born the justice he has shown. R.

2nd Reading 1 Jn 3:18-24

*The life of a Christian is expected to be a life of faith and love in action. Only on this condition can we claim that we are keeping God's commandments.*

R —A proclamation from the First Letter of John

Children, let us love not just 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 Word of the Lord!

All—Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation Jn 15:4.5

All—Alleluia! Alleluia!

"Remain in me as I remain in you," says the Lord. "Whoever remains in me will bear much fruit." Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel Jn 15:1-8

*The allegory of the vine and the branches illustrates the vital relationship that exists between Jesus and us. It also emphasizes the need for us to live in communion with him.*

P —The Lord be with you!

All—And with your spirit!

P —A proclamation from the holy Gospel according to John

All—Glory to you, O Lord!

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."

The Gospel of the Lord!

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

## Homily

### Profession of Faith

(Nicene Creed)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pon-

tius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen!

### Prayer of the Faithful

**P** –In Baptism we have been united to Jesus Christ and have become part of his mystical body. He is the vine, we are the branches. Our life depends on our remaining united with him. Therefore, we confidently pray:

**All** – **Source of our life, hear us!**

**C** –That the Church may always be a prosperous vine, bearing fruits of holiness, justice and peace, let us pray! **R.**

**C** –That all the baptized may remain united with the Lord by living according to the Gospel principles and values, let us pray! **R.**

**C** –That all the lay faithful may preserve their union with Jesus through the offering of their daily activities and fervent prayers, let us pray! **R.**

**C** –That all those who receive holy Communion may strengthen their union with Christ through a life of service to their neighbor, let us pray! **R.**

**C** –That all those who are at the point of death may cling to Jesus as their sole source of hope and salvation, let us pray! **R.**

**C** –Let us pray in silence for our personal intentions. (*Pause*)  
Let us pray! **R.**

**P** –Lord Jesus, full of trust in the help of your grace, we renew our commitment to reject whatever can separate us from you and our neighbor. Keep us one with you as you are one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.

**All** – **Amen!**



### Preparation of the Gifts

**P** –Pray, brethren . . .

**All** – **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

### Prayer over the Offerings

**P** –O God, who by the wonderful exchange effected in this sacrifice have made us partakers of the one supreme Godhead, grant, we pray, that, as we have come to know your truth, we may make it ours by a worthy way of life.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All** – **Amen!**

### Preface of Easter II

**P** –The Lord be with you!

**All** – **And with your spirit!**

**P** –Lift up your hearts!

**All** – **We lift them up to the Lord!**

**P** –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

**All** – **It is right and just!**

**P** –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

Through him the children of light rise to eternal life and the halls of the heavenly Kingdom are thrown open to the faithful; for his Death is our ransom from death, and in his rising, the life of all has risen.

Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim:

**All** – **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

### Memorial Acclamation

**P** –The mystery of faith!

**All** – **We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again!**



**All** – **Our Father . . .**

**P** –Deliver us, Lord . . .

**All** – **For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.**

### Sign of Peace

#### Breaking of the Bread

**All** – **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2x)**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.**

### Communion

**P** –Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.

**All** – **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

### Communion Antiphon

(*To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.*)

**I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.**

### Prayer after Communion

**P** –Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All** – **Amen!**

## CONCLUDING RITES



**P** –The Lord be with you.

**All—And with your spirit!**

**P** –Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing. (*Pause*) May the Lord live in you and strengthen you by His grace. May He help you remain close to Him in prayer

and give you true love for one another.

**All—Amen!**

**P** –May the Lord help you to seek Him with all your heart and to deserve what He promises.

**All—Amen!**

**P** –May the Lord make you His instruments of communion and solidarity in your fam-

ily and society.

**All—Amen!**

**P** –May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All—Amen!**

**P** –The Mass is ended. Go in the peace of Christ.

**All—Thanks be to God!**

## Branches of a Fruitful Vine

The claim, “*Without me, you can do nothing,*” would sound empty or offensive and off-putting even on the lips of the most popular leader. Yet, when it comes from Jesus, we have to admit that it is simply true. In our spiritual life, in fact, we are absolutely dependent on him. Just as God is the only source of grace, so is JESUS CHRIST the only “channel” through which divine grace reaches us. Just as we have no alternative sources of life, aside from the Creator, so we have no “alternative ways” of reaching out to Him and enjoying the fullness of His saving love, except through Christ, the only Savior of mankind. He is the one and only Mediator. (*See 1 Tim 2:5.*)

All the other “channels of grace” that we know of – the Church, the Sacraments, the Bible, prayer . . . – are all “secondary channels.” They are valid and effective only *because of Christ*. They derive from him and are essentially oriented toward him.

We share in God’s life by being united with Jesus. Such a life-giving union started out at baptism, when we became part of him – members of his Body, thereby beginning to enjoy the fruits of his passion, death and resurrection. Jesus’ union and solidarity with us caused him suffering and death. Our union and solidarity with him produces in us happiness and salvation. Such is the vital meaning of us being branches of the fruitful vine that Jesus is.

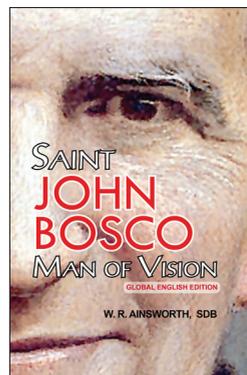
But our union with Jesus can be broken because of our weakness. *It does get broken whenever we sin.* This should never happen. Instead, we should steadily aim not only at preserving our union with Jesus, but actually at increasing it because such a union is not static, but dynamic and vital. We call it a *COMMUNION*, and it brings about a mutual “inhabitation”: He is in us, and we are in Him. (*See Jn 15:4.*) A real communion can take place only among free beings. It is rooted in sincere appreciation and total mutual acceptance and

is nourished by selfless love.

The preservation and growth of our union with our Lord Jesus Christ can happen only on one condition: that we keep his commandments. (*See 1 Jn 3:24.*) Then shall we bear the abundant fruits of the new life inaugurated by Jesus with his resurrection, especially the fruits of peace, and the genuine *love of neighbor* which expresses itself “in deeds and truth and not merely in words” (*1 Jn 3:18.19*). Then shall we enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit in us, like the members of the apostolic community (*see Acts 9:31, and 1 Jn 3:24*), and continually experience in ourselves the reality and the power of Christ’s Resurrection. (*See Phil 3:10.*)

Young people loved him.  
Because he loved them truly.  
Get to know this amazing saint,  
miracle worker, and champion of the poor.

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