

## 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

**Sunday, April 28**

Acts 9:26-31  
Ps 22:26-28,30-32  
1 Jn 3:18-24  
Jn 15:1-8

**Monday, April 29**  
**St. Catherine of Siena**

Acts 14:5-18  
Ps 115:1-4,15-16  
Jn 14:21-26

**Tuesday, April 30**

Acts 14:19-28  
Ps 145:10-13b,21  
Jn 14:27-31a

**Wednesday, May 1**

Acts 15:1-6  
Ps 122:1-5  
Jn 15:1-8

**Thursday, May 2**

**St. Athanasius**  
Acts 15:7-21  
Ps 96:1-3,10  
Jn 15:9-11

**Friday, May 3**  
**Sts. Philip and James**

1 Cor 15:1-8  
Ps 19:2-5  
Jn 14:6-14

**Saturday, May 4**

Acts 16:1-10  
Ps 100:1b-3,5  
Jn 15:18-21

There are times in the garden of our lives when enemies slip in and threaten the beauty and very existence of our spiritual lives. If one isn't careful, bad soil, pests, predators, parasites, dryness, and weeds can be very destructive. We will only bear fruit if we are pruned of everything unhealthy to our souls, and we must be sure to cling fast to the vine of Christ who strengthens us.

What a beautiful metaphor Christ shared in the Upper Room! Jesus was trying to help His disciples understand the gift of Divine Grace and how the lives of Christians must stay joined to the glorified life of Jesus to be nourished, sustained, and grow to fruitfulness.

Like any master gardener of a vineyard, God our Father delights in each of us whom He plants in His garden. He is passionate about our growth, and He wants us to reach the fruitful potential of our souls in this life so that we may fulfill our purpose in His vineyard here on earth.

He fertilizes the soil to help us grow. He waters, weeds, and prunes our vines to help us become all we were meant to be. God knows the beautiful fruitfulness and growth that we can experience in His perfect plan. He watches over each of His vines with loving care.

Our souls are made to be the perfect reflection of Christ. God the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit, watches over us with loving guidance and protection and wants our souls to grow in love and holiness.



Our spiritual lives are dependent on the gift of Divine Grace and our souls are nourished and sustained by the love of Christ. It is vital that we trust Him with our whole hearts to do whatever is needed in our lives for our best growth. We must trust Christ and always stick close to Him.

As much as plants need air, sunshine, and water, a branch is just as reliant upon the vine. Without the vine – Jesus – our souls will shrivel and die. Letting go of our own selfish wills – by fully surrendering to God's Holy Will and trusting His pruning and weeding in our lives – will surely help our souls blossom, bear fruit, and become all we were made to be by our Father.

**Reflect & Discuss:**

- † How can you welcome and accept God's pruning when it feels so unpleasant?
- † In what ways is God pruning and shaping you into His Image?
- † Do you see the difference this pruning is making in your walk with Christ?
- † How can we ensure that God gets the glory for our fruit?