

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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.

PENITENTIAL ACT

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
You bring pardon and peace to the sinner: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**
You bring light to those in darkness: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**
May almighty God have mercy on us.....

THE GLORIA

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.

OPENING PRAYER

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.....

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Acts 9:26-31

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 21:26-28. 30-32

R. You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly, 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 John 3:18-24

A reading from the first letter of St. John

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 own 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. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Make your home in me, as I make mine in you, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 15: 1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

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



focus on sunday

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 28th April 2024

Jesus describes his relation to us like the closeness of a branch to a tree. We are brought to life in him, grow in him as people who can love each other, and become in him a people of eternal hope.



I am the true vine...



'Abide in me'

Thanks to the incredible scientific discoveries of the past century, humanity is beginning to realise just how deeply interconnected everything is in our universe. Every atom of carbon in our muscles, calcium in our bones and iron in our blood was created inside a star before the Earth was born. Despite appearances, we share the essential components for life with our fellow creatures, we are deeply embedded in, part of, this web of life and all of creation shares in this creative Mystery together. St. Paul tells us that if we want to understand God more fully, then we should look at God's creation (Romans 1:20). Pope Francis reiterates this in *Laudato Si'*, 'to contemplate creation is to hear a message, to listen to a silent voice' (LS, §85).

Jesus constantly evokes images from the natural world to teach us something about God. 'He often stopped to contemplate the beauty shown by his Father and invited his disciples to perceive a divine message in things' (LS, §97). The grapevine image, a common biblical symbol of God's relationship with God's people, shows us that there is no separation between the human and the Divine, we belong to each other. 'Abide with me' reminds us to not lose sight of the reality of this intimate connectedness. We are being invited to rediscover God's earthly dynamic all around us, so that the fruits of the vine can express the reality of God's presence in our world. Perhaps this week, you can spend more time in nature. What do you find there? What is God saying to you through creation at this time? Jesus says that his followers are pruned by his Word. What is your experience of allowing God's Word to shape your life, to speak into your experiences, to shape who you are becoming?

Extract from The Deep End – A Journey Through the Sunday Gospels in the Year of Mark, Messenger Publications, 2023, Jane Mellett & Triona Doherty.