

**I am the vine.  
You are the branches.**

*Fifth Sunday of  
Easter*



*San Ignacio de Loyola Parish*

*May 3, 2015*

## REFLECTION ON THE WORD

**A** well-kept and appealing garden takes many hours of work. Left without care, the shrubs become unkempt, the grass looks like hay, the flowers become leggy. Cutting back, cutting down, cutting away is what brings out the beauty of a garden. This kind of work is more than a matter of simple tidiness. It shows that the people who live on the property care. In today's Gospel, Jesus speaks metaphorically of his Father's pruning us branches who are attached to the vine who is Jesus. God's care for us underlines the oft-repeated Gospel words: fruit, vine, branch.



Just as God planted and tended the true vine Jesus, so does God tend us—prune us—so that we, too, might 'bear much fruit'. God prunes from us whatever does not give life, and nourishes within us whatever does. Our remaining in Jesus, our bearing fruit as disciples, our believing in the Son and keeping the commandments (see Second Reading) are all the work of the Father who tends with great care the risen Life we share with Jesus.

The good fruit we bear when we remain in Jesus is witnessing to Gospel living, drawing others to the Life Jesus offers in the Holy Spirit, and glorifying the Father by the choices we make to live as Jesus taught us. True discipleship is about bearing this fruit.

**Words to reflect upon: God prunes from us whatever does not give life**

## Thursday, May 7th is the National Day of Prayer

The theme for 2015 is **Lord, Hear Our Cry**, emphasizing the need for individuals, corporately and individually, to place their faith in the unfailing character of their Creator, who is sovereign over all governments, authorities, and men. **"Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day."** 1 Kings 8:28

## POPE FRANCIS' EASTER MESSAGE 2015

"On Easter morning, alerted by the women, Peter and John ran to the tomb. They found it open and empty. Then they drew near and "bent down" in order to enter it. To enter into the mystery, we need to "bend down", to abase ourselves. Only those who abase themselves



understand the glorification of Jesus and are able to follow him on his way. The world proposes that we put ourselves forward at all costs, that we compete, that we prevail... But Christians, by the grace of Christ dead and risen, are the seeds of another humanity, in which we seek to live in service to one another. This is not weakness, but true strength! Those who bear within them God's power, his love and his justice, do not need to employ violence; they speak and act with the power of truth, beauty and love."

The entire 9:30 Community rejoices with **Jonathon Gonzales** and his family on the occasion of his First Holy Communion today.



*"May Jesus and Mary take your hand and lead the way as you come to the Holy Table for the first time. May you never lack for daily bread and drink."*



*Oh, Queen of all grace and counsel,  
Cause of our joy, Oh Clement Virgin, come:  
Show us those eyes as chaste as lightning,*



*Kinder than June and true  
as Scripture.  
Heal with your looks the  
poisons of the universe,  
And claim your son's regenerate  
world!*

— Thomas Merton

## An Easter Meditation

(John 20:21-22)

We are all on a pilgrimage, walking to an encounter with the Power of Easter, the Risen Christ. He waits to give us the same Easter gifts he gave his disciples after the Resurrection, gifts that empowered them to go out and change the world; he intends they do the same thing for us.

The second of Christ's Easter gifts is **JOY** (John 20:19). We rejoice with Mary Magdalene at the encounter with the Risen Lord. This is our **Easter Joy**: we are daughters and sons of the Resurrection. He is ever present in our midst. Embrace **Easter joy!** Wait for him with open hearts, but, remember, you have to show up for the encounter to receive the gift!

**Practice joy!** Listen to Bono & The Edge, Puccini, Louis Armstrong, Sinatra, Willie Colon—whatever pushes your button and lifts your soul toward heaven. Try to inhabit the resurrection no matter your circumstances. Sing with your children or just in the shower. Trust the God of Surprises and with a smile on your face. Celebrate with food that you don't ordinarily buy: waffles and whipped cream for breakfast, a special wine, Dutch chocolate, every day a small special treat. Dance! Laugh! (**Immerse your children in the joy of life so that they are never tempted to despair of it.**) Sing alleluia! Is it any wonder some people find it hard to believe in the resurrection of Jesus when they don't see us, who claim to be true believers, throwing our hats in the air?

## Living our Easter Life

Part of our living our Easter Life—its dying and rising—requires that we be willing to be pruned. We must allow God to tend us, so that we might rid ourselves of whatever gets in the way of our being a faithful disciple who not only proclaims the Gospel, but also lives it in “deed and truth”. First of all, this means that we must witness to an intimate relationship with God through prayer and worship—both private and public acts of glorifying God. We also witness “in deed and truth” through how we relate to others. Taking someone troubled under our wing to help them is but one example of how we remain in Jesus through our caring for others.

**Words to reflect upon: “in deed and truth”**

**We are all called** (in different ways) to share and communicate and practice the Good News.

*Our Mission is to allow Jesus to be present in our world today —TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS — Talk about it, live it, communicate it by our lives, the way we live our lives.*

As laity we exercise a very unique style of evangelization — of economics, suffering, justice, family, education of children and youth, professions, work—at the service of the kingdom...

**Fr. Talbot gave us this message on July 7, 2013... How're we doing so far?**

## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE



**On reading Ecclesiastes 3:1-4**

*There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens/A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant/ A time to kill and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build./A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.*

There's no use being alive if you aren't alive. Someone is waiting breathlessly to check your pulse. Do enough of something to develop one. For all our sakes!

## Set This Dry, Boring Place on Fire!

**Hafiz** seeks to broaden and deepen our understanding of “Real Love”, both in human relationships and in our growing obsession with Divinity. He prods us to explore Love's possibilities and test its apparent boundaries. He says our progress on this Journey can be measured only by the intensity of our love, the living flame that illumines all life. Begin to love now, he says, don't wait—let there be no regrets.

**“My heart is a raging volcano  
Of love for you!”**

— Hafiz

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,*

**LET US PRAY TOGETHER TODAY FOR THE CHRONICALLY ILL:**



Sylvia Tasner, Fr. Vega and his brothers Albert and Jerry, Rudy & Sonia Méndez, **Maggie Maziarz**, and Peter Fiorito.

*Let us pray for our brothers and sisters in Nepal: the victims of the earthquake, the survivors and for the rescue workers.*

**“Oh Lord, show them your kindness and mercy”.**