



**SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2015** FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER  
**Fruit of the womb**

Prepositions are fascinating parts of speech: small, seemingly trivial until one looks closely. When Jesus uses the metaphor of a grapevine to illustrate our relationship to him and to God, he says, “Remain *in* me.” To be “*in*” is not to be “*on*”! We are not random branches grafted onto the vine. We’ve been chosen to bear fruit. We have the vine’s very sap, its inner life, its juices, as Gerard Manley Hopkins says of spring: “What is all this juice and all this joy?” We belong there, in Christ. We are pruned. We abide. We remain. We ripen. We bear.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 9:26-31; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8 (53).*  
*“Remain in me, as I remain in you.”*

**MONDAY, MAY 4** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**At the heart of it all**

“Jesus knew and loved us each and all during his life,” says the Catholic Catechism. “He has loved us all with a human heart.” Take a moment to let that teaching sink in: Jesus knew you long before you were made aware of your own existence. That alone is all you need to understand your life’s purpose. You were, are, and will continue to be in the mind and heart of Jesus, who is love itself. What joy there is in embracing that love!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 14:5-18; John 14:21-26 (285).* “Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me.”

**TUESDAY, MAY 5** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**Cling to the love and let go of the fear**

If (or *when*) you feel down, confused and especially afraid, wondering—in spite of the evidence!—whether God loves you, go to John’s gospel and read what Jesus wanted his friends to hold onto (chapters 13-15). Jesus almost pleads with his intimates to realize how much he loves them and how they/we and he will not be separated, in spite of what is about to happen to him. Do little pockets of fear pop up in your day, moments of dismay? Hold on to “Be not afraid. Trust in God and trust in me.” Cling to that love Jesus has for you, but let go of the fear. Relax. Be at peace. God is in control.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a (286).* “I am going away and I will come back to you.”

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**Why wine?**

In the ancient Near East wine was essential for sustenance; it was a symbol of life and celebration. Perhaps that is why wine plays a key role in Jesus’ first public miracle, where he changed water into wine at the wedding at Cana, and in the Last Supper, when he reveals who he is to his disciples. Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus becomes the symbol of life and celebration for all of us. He is the fruit of the vine poured out for us. Drink deeply.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 15:1-6; John 15:1-8 (287).* “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.”

**THURSDAY, MAY 7** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**Be careful using “us and them”**

The phrase “us and them” separates humanity into teams of rivals. But what happens when those teams change sides? When Saint Paul, apostle to the Gentiles, talks about “us,” he means his Jewish brothers and sisters. For Paul, “them” refers to non-Jewish followers of Jesus—which curiously now means, mostly, “us.” Today the Jewish community celebrates the mystical side of faith on the feast of Lag B’Omer, the revelation of divine secrets to a second-century rabbi. Mysticism reminds us all that heaven’s view of history is quite fuller than ours. Isn’t it time to build more bridges, and to see as God sees?

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 15:7-21; John 15:9-11 (288).* “God made no distinction between us and [Gentiles], for by faith he purified their hearts.”

**FRIDAY, MAY 8** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**A friendship worth fighting for**

Jesus wants to be your friend. But accept the invitation at your own risk, because that is what it requires: Risking all you have, all you are, your very life for his sake. That doesn’t exactly conjure a romantic image of hanging out with Jesus watching a ballgame. In fact, true friendship is complicated. As a friend of Jesus, you will find yourself angry and frustrated at what is being asked of you. But, as renowned theologian Martin Marty assures us in *Friendship*, his little treasure of a book on this sacred relationship, “For friends, never coming into conflict is probably a sign of apathy; people who care deeply about anything in the world are going to disagree.” So go ahead, accept Jesus’ invitation of friendship, and get ready for the fights, fun, and unconditional love that the best of friendships bring.

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 15:22-31; John 15:12-17 (289).* “I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.”

**SATURDAY, MAY 9** EASTER WEEKDAY  
**Already taken care of. Thank God.**

The events of Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection have brought redemption, healing, and wholeness, as we declare when we pray the words, “We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.” There is no longer separation between the so-called “secular” world and the reign of God. With Christ, we participate in the life welling up within us and within the world. Next time you are waiting in traffic, wrangling with a tough business decision, or scrolling through your newsfeed, be on the lookout for Christ, who has already redeemed even the challenging situations we have yet to resolve!

TODAY’S READINGS: *Acts 16:1-10; John 15:18-21 (290).* “God had called us to proclaim the Good News.”



*Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time.*

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CatholicMom.com Gospel Activities  
John 15:1-8

Z Z B V X M Z B D S R W Z N D V I N E O  
C D C A N N O T J Q Q R L J L M J Y Q Z  
Y W P R U N E S Z E Q V Z A U M P Q M C  
Y O V Y K Z B Z Q V S J Y X X J W M M X  
V R V Y Z Z R Y R Z L U X Q V F R U I T  
J D T R U E A Y E Z L Z S B E A R J G G  
F X W Y Y V N Y M Y N X Z T Z Z K V G K  
P A Y L W Z C Y A K P B D P M W R S L M  
F Y T D H G H Y I X X G J B Q S W V O Z  
G I Y H V F E Z N M O Z P A Q V F Q R Y  
Y X R Y E Q S V B Y G X D Y P T Z Y I Q  
Y Y V E Z R X M F X R Q I W K H J Q F W  
C Y Y Z Q Z Y K P V O X S M Y R Q Q I Y  
D B U R N E D Y X Q W G C W V O M Q E Q  
P Z V N O T H I N G E Y I Z Y W Q V D Y  
H P V Y Q Q G M Y Z R Q P W K N J N P P  
G M K H K Q S Q Q M J V L Y J M Y Q Y H  
B X H L K M T G G K Z Q E V O F Y A A Y  
J M F V T Y Q E Y Z X F S F H Q Y V H V  
S P O K E F O Y V Q P V K V N F L F M H

**Word Bank**

Bear, Branches, Burned, Cannot, Disciples, Father, Fire, Fruit, Glorified, Grower, Jesus,  
John, Nothing, Prunes, Remain, Spoke, Thrown, True, Vine, Word

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