



## A GARDENING LESSON

(JOHN 15:1-8)

In the Gospel reading today, Jesus describes himself as the true vine for his disciples. The one tending the vine is the Father. The plant is not decorative: its purpose is to produce fruit and for this to happen a certain amount of pruning has to take place.

The instrument for this task is the word which the disciples whom Jesus is addressing have accepted and are therefore already cleansed or pruned and in a fit condition to be productive. But, as with any growing plant, care has to be taken that this healthy state is maintained, so "remaining" (or "abiding") in Jesus is vital. The image of the vine is especially appropriate, as it suggests the intimate flow of life from the trunk into the branches: if this communication is interrupted or impeded, the branch will wither and lose its reason for being part of the plant. If the disciples remain in Jesus and his words remain in them, then the positive result is that whatever they ask, the Father will grant.

This passage warns against any sense of complacency: the image of the living vine suggests more than a passive attitude towards Jesus, that being his disciple is proved by bearing much fruit, which will redound to the glory of the Father, another strong theme in the Fourth Gospel. It is the word of Jesus which gives life to the disciple, and it is the mutual love of the disciples which will reveal them as disciples of Jesus, to the glory of the Father. ■

### SAY

Whoever remains in me... bears fruit in plenty.

(John 15:5)

### LEARN

The image of the vine or vineyard is used in the Hebrew scriptures as a symbol for the people of Israel.

The life principle of the creature is in the blood (Leviticus 17:14).

Jesus "shedding his blood" really means that Jesus "gave his life" for us.

### DO

Buy a bunch of grapes. Take some time at home to contemplate them in the context of Jesus' teaching about the vine and the branches. Then enjoy them!



## REFLECT

There is no scene in John's Gospel of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. The Eucharistic text is usually identified as the feeding of the crowd of five thousand, which only concerns the bread. Some scholars suggest that the passage on Jesus as the true vine provides the teaching on the Eucharistic wine. Whatever the merits of such arguments, there is an interesting lesson in the idea of communicating life.

The importance of the branch being properly joined to the trunk is

unquestionable: the stem is the source of the branch's life. In the New Testament tradition of the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus speaks about "the cup of my blood". In biblical thought, the blood is where the life principle of a person or animal is to be found. When we speak of Jesus "shedding his blood" on the cross, we really mean that Jesus "gave his life": the sacramentally consecrated wine is a very powerful way in which the risen Jesus communicates his life to his disciples and makes sense, if we think about it in the context of the vine

providing life-giving nourishment to the branches: this enables them to bear the grapes, which then produce wine.

One of the most important reforms of the Second Vatican Council was the restoring of the chalice to the laity: as Jesus commanded, "drink of it, *all of you*". Perhaps we might reflect that it is one way in which the Lord communicates his life to us. ■

**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.

**GLORIA**

Glorify 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**

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*,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**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.

**PSALM**

Psalm 21

Response:

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  
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.

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 not remain in me  
is like a branch that has been thrown away  
– he withers;

these branches are collected and thrown on  
the fire,  
and they are burnt.

If you remain in me  
and my words remain in you,  
you may ask what you will  
and you shall get it.

It is to the glory of my Father that you  
should bear much fruit,

and then you will be my disciples."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

*(all bow during the next two lines)*

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the  
Father almighty;

from there he will come to judge the living  
and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

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.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

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**

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.  
Amen.

# ***Our Lady & St Edmund of Abingdon*** ***1 Radley Rd, Abingdon on Thames, Oxon, OX14 3PL***

We are a **LiveSimply** parish aiming to live Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity with the Poor

Parish Priest: Fr. Jamie McGrath Tel: 01235 520375  
Parish Secretary: Lisa Paterson Tel: 01235 520375  
Office Hours: 10.30am-12.30pm Tuesday to Friday  
Office Email: abingdon@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

*We live stream all services*

Safeguarding Team: Tel. 07572 935 230  
Visits at JR Hospital: Priest/Chaplain 01865 221732  
Visits and Help: Society of Vincent de Paul Group, contact via Parish Office  
Parish Website: [www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)  
Primary School: St. Edmund's School, Radley Road, Abingdon, OX14 3PP Tel 521558



Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg. Charity No 246871

[www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

## **OFFICE CLOSURE DATES**

Please note that the parish office will be closed on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May. Also from Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July until Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August.

## **PRIVATE PRAYER**

We are blessed that the church can be open, but for **private prayer only**, on the following days and times:

✠ **Tuesdays: 12pm to 1pm**  
✠ **Fridays: 12pm to 1pm**

## **MASS BOOKINGS:**

***On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May you can book for Masses from Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May to Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May. This includes Ascension Day (13<sup>th</sup> May) when the Masses will be at 9am and 7pm.***

**PLEASE** remember to give as many dates and times when you could attend, and book **on** the Monday – otherwise you may be disappointed. Also be clear on the number of people you are booking for and let us know if you would like to attend more than one Mass during the week.

## **HOW TO BOOK FOR MASS**

### **No Internet Access?**

Phone **07395 946827** **EACH MONDAY** between 10am and 11am **ONLY** to book a place for the **FOLLOWING** week

### **Have Internet Access?**

**DON'T** phone. Instead, email: [contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](mailto:contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)

**EACH MONDAY**, to book a place for the **FOLLOWING** week

## **CONFESSIONS**

By appointment only for now. Please contact the **parish office** to book an appointment.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

We are currently still not able to offer any printed material in church. Please bring your own newsletter with you if you would like to (you can download it from our website).

## **5<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter (Year B)**

***Attendance through booking system only, but also available on our live stream***

### **Sunday 2 May**

10.15am Mass  
2.00pm Mass in Polish  
6.30pm Mass

### **Fifth Sunday of Easter**

(Ann Kenneth-Watts, RIP)  
(Private intention)

### **Monday 3 May**

9am Mass

### **Saints Philip & James**

(Private intention)

### **Tuesday 4 May**

NO Mass See: [www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse](http://www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse) for other masses

### **The English Martyrs**

### **Wednesday 5 May**

7pm Mass

(Josette Bevilacqua, RIP)

### **Thursday 6 May**

9.30am Mass

(Private intention)

### **Friday 7 May**

7pm Mass

(Mike Paterson Special Intentions - 50th Birthday)

### **Saturday 8 May**

12pm Mass

(Private intention)

**Please note that Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May is the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. Masses on that day will be at 9am and 7pm – attendance through our booking system.**

## **SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER:**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot today receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.



**St Edmund's Catholic  
Primary School**

In our school every day we learn, love and pray.



## VACANCY

### Senior Leader, St Edmund's School

Our Governors are seeking to appoint a highly motivated and inspirational leader to join our Headteacher in leading our successful and much-loved school. This is an exciting opportunity to become a key member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Calls to discuss this position further with our Headteacher, Mrs Maria Delany-White are encouraged and warmly welcomed. Please contact The School Business Manager (01235 521558 or [clomas2266@st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:clomas2266@st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk)) to request an application pack.

**Closing date:** Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (noon)



## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

In response to a request from the 'Let's Be Honest' working group, the Bishops have chosen Tuesday of the 5<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter as the Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse. So this year it will be on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May**. In this season of hope and new life, this is not a penitential day for the failure of the Church and others to respond to the scourge of abuse, but a day of prayer for those who have been abused.

Bishop David Oakley and the 'Let's Be Honest' Group have produced some materials for use on that day and the surrounding days, which can be accessed on the News page of our website. Much of the material in this resource has been written by and with survivors.

## PRAYING THE ROSARY DURING MAY

The month of May is dedicated to Our Lady – a great intercessor for our prayers. Why not join the group of people who pray the Rosary on Zoom on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays each week at 8pm? Just email for the joining instructions: [contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk](mailto:contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION TRAINING PROGRAMME

This two-year course beginning in September, is a unique combination of online and residential learning facilitated by seasoned practitioners at the *Centre for Applied Carmelite Spirituality in Oxford*. It offers unparalleled formation in the spiritual life and training for those who wish to accompany others on their spiritual journey, while providing a forum for the mutual enrichment of Christians from different denominations. Contact, Ruth Preston ([ruth.preston@carmelite.org.uk](mailto:ruth.preston@carmelite.org.uk)) or find more information through the News page of our website.

## LIVING LAUDATO SI'

This week's diocesan newsletter features the small area in our parish grounds which has been set aside for wild flowers and insects as part of our *Live Simply Award*. Quoting from the Laudato Si' document: "*St Francis asked that part of the Friary garden always be left untouched, so that wildflowers and herbs could grow there, and those who saw them could raise their minds to God, the Creator of such beauty. Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise.*" (LS12)

## MONTH OF MAY

Pope Francis has asked for a marathon of prayer around the world throughout May for an end to the pandemic. The initiative, behind which the Pope has thrown his support, involves 30 Marian Shrines from various parts of the world and it takes place under the theme "*The whole Church was fervently praying to God,*" which recalls a verse in the Book of Acts (12:5). The Rosary will be broadcast on *Vatican News* daily at 6pm Rome time (5pm UK time). A link to this online site is available on the News page of our website.

## THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

A reminder that Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May is the solemnity of the *Ascension of the Lord*. Mass times on that day will be at 9am and 7pm. Physical attendance is through our booking system in the usual way. As always, every Mass is live streamed as well.

## MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.

Amen.