

**For The Bulletin Of
April 29, 2018**



**THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF
EASTER**

From Father Robert

Grapes that are native to the United States are good for only one thing: grape juice. They do not produce good wine. On the other hand, many grapes native to Europe, Sangiovese, for example, one of the primary grapes that is used for Chianti, are excellent for producing wine. There are stories of nineteenth century immigrants coming to California with their grapevine cuttings, so they would be able to plant their own native grapes in this New World and have wine. They tended these cuttings onboard ships and then across the Appalachian range, the Great Plains, and the Rocky Mountains before finally settling on the West Coast.

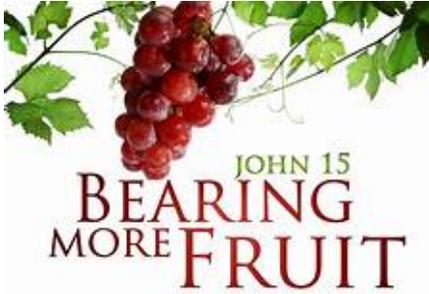
These grapevine cuttings were precious reminders of the land, culture, and people the immigrants left behind; and these same cuttings, properly transplanted, cared for, and pruned, would provide life and happiness in this, the New World. And it turned out that California's climate, Napa Valley in particular, was ideal for growing grapes that would produce some of the world's best wines.

We can imagine something of this when Jesus says that He is the Vine. In typical Johannine fashion, we have here no parable about the kingdom of God being like a vineyard. For the Fourth Gospel, Jesus *is* the Vine! He goes a step further to say that the Father is the vine grower. For us and our image above, perhaps the Father is the immigrant who brings the precious vine to the New World, ready to plant in fertile soil.

Jesus reminds us of the vine grower's role. Not only does the vine grower ensure its viability, but he prunes branches to produce fruit, and cuts away those that do not produce any fruit. In a stark vision of the end time, Jesus takes yet another step to say that those branches that have been cut away will be thrown into the fire to be burned. Such apocalyptic images are rare in this gospel, though they appear more frequently in Matthew. As vine grower, the Father tends His precious vine much like the immigrant bringing native cuttings to the New World. Once transplanted, the real work begins.

Where are we in the metaphor? We are the branches, fully aware that no branch can produce fruit on its own. We must remain attached to the vine to bear fruit. So as not to be lopped off, we remain in Jesus.

This agrarian image is ancient, but easily applicable and comprehended. Anyone with experience in gardening or observing nature grasps the symbolism here. The metaphor is simple yet sublime, and seems to be evidence of a Good Teacher.



Living The Paschal Mystery

The image used in today's gospel is polyvalent. It can be understood in a number of ways. For one, Jesus says that the branches that do bear fruit are pruned, to bear more. We can reflect on that to wonder why these fruit-bearing branches need to be pruned at all! Isn't it enough to cut off the branches that do not bear fruit? No, for the vine grower, merely producing fruit is not enough. He knows that the branch can produce more. And anyone with gardening experience would agree.

And so we at times have the experience of being pruned. We can wonder why. Things seem to be going well. Life is in order. Good things are happening. And, yet, we are pruned. We die to parts of ourselves regularly. And this dying is essential if we are to produce more fruit. The vine grower, the Father, knows what He is doing. Our task is simply to remain on the vine, and to produce fruit. Our being pruned is a natural and healthy, though perhaps painful, experience that is necessary for us to grow into the people we are to become. This process of being pruned, of dying to self, is essential for the Christian life, and it is directed, even carried out by the Father. It is the paschal mystery. The result of which is producing fruit.

As we come to the final weeks of this year's Easter season, what questions does this gospel raise for you?

- How does our connectedness to Christ make our parish more than just another charitable or humanitarian organization?
- What are the signs that an individual or a church is in need of "pruning?" What in your life or our parish is in need of "pruning?" What in your life or our parish needs to be "gathered and thrown into the fire?"
- Consider St. Paul's conversion and the fear and distrust of the Jerusalem church when he seeks to become part of the community he has persecuted? Have you ever experienced a negative reaction from others when you have sought to change or move on to a new approach or position?
- Have you known, in your life and work, a mediator like Barnabas?

When life becomes so busy that time with God seems impossible to find, we can regain our focus by remembering that Jesus said, "I am the True Vine; abide in me."

About Liturgy: Being Witnesses For One Another

We know well that to be disciples we are to be witnesses for Christ. Yet we are also called to be witnesses for one another, speaking on behalf of the work that Christ is doing in others. We see how that happened in today's first reading when Barnabas testified to the apostles and gave witness to Saul's own conversion.

In the liturgy, we give a similar kind of witness for one another at significant moments. In the process of conversion to Christ, sponsors, godparents, and other members of the assembly give public witness at the Rite of Election to the work God has done in a catechumen's life. In the Order of Celebrating Matrimony, the assembly stands as witness to the covenantal love God has already made with the couple, who now enters that same covenant of love with each other. At confirmation and at ordination, the candidates are presented to the presider by a member of the assembly who testifies to the candidates' readiness for the sacrament. And every time we offer intercessions, we are "exercising the office of our baptismal Priesthood (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, #69), giving witness for one another before God to the needs of the church, the world, those who suffer, and the local faith community.

By being witnesses for one another, we offer encouragement and hope and we help one another recognize and strengthen the good work that God continues to do in the world through each one of us. Since it was God Who first chose us and called us to be one with Him in baptism, bearing witness for one another is also bearing witness to Jesus.



The Floral Arrangement before the Altar today is placed to the Glory of God and in honor of the **90th Birthday of Dorothy Lamendola and the 71st Birthday of Father Robert and his 44th Anniversary of Ordination.**

Please see the bulletin for all the details.



YLI Annual Pasta Dinner

Our YLI is sponsoring their Annual Pasta Dinner **today**, Sunday, April 29th, in our parish hall, patio, and garden, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A special part of the day is celebrating the 90th birthday of our beloved **Dorothy Lamendola!** The menu consists of Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, and the most delicious Pasta and Sauce you will ever will have! There is also beer, wine, and dessert. Come out join your fellow parishioners and guests as we support our YLI and their many charitable projects which benefit both our parish and our sister parish of Holy Rosary. Tickets are available from the table in the Gathering Plaza after each liturgy or at the door this afternoon.

Thank You From SPRED

Dear Father Robert,

Thank you for graciously welcoming our SPRED (Special Religious Education) community to last week's 10:00 am Liturgy. Our Friend, Eliza Mendoza, was especially excited to receive

Confirmation and First Eucharist with her St. Ignatius of Antioch SPRED family. Eliza's family was very touched by your hospitality and with the gentleness in which you administered the Sacraments.

Thank you Don and your magnificent choir for working with us as we gestured to the Responsorial Psalm. Thank you to Frances and Steve Rojek, Maryann Peddicord, Nancy Newton, and Carole Miller for all your help.

Blessings,

St. Ignatius of Antioch SPRED
Catechists
Susan Fleming, Yolanda Garcia, Vicki McCoy, Mitzi Reagan, and Evie Viera



Pentecost

The conclusion of The Great Fifty Days and the Easter Season takes place on the weekend of May 19th and 20th. The color for the liturgies that weekend is **RED!** I want to give you plenty of notice so you can plan to wear the RED of Pentecost at each of our liturgies that weekend and add to the festivity of the feast.



I don't know what our parish would do without the volunteers who give so much of their time and themselves to help the parish. If you don't see your name listed among the current volunteers, I invite you to get involved! The best way to take ownership of the parish and truly make it yours, is getting involved: don't be a spectator – be a participator!

...Our thanks to the faithful crew who come early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Angela Bueno, Carole Miller, Mency Osborne, Emilia Freking, Heather Hatteroth, Rose Salamanca, and Steve Rojek.**

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Harlan Young, and Virginia Noack.**

...to **Mary Anne Douville** and **Faultless Cleaners** for all the dry cleaning, sewing and miscellaneous other tasks that are completed by her for the parish.

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Jeannine Ford, Melody Costanza, Harlan Young, Alicia Perez, Sharon Cissell, Yvette Young, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Frank Zamora and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Carole Miller, Dave Costanza, Beth Enea, Richard Enea, Kathy Augusta and Vince Augusta.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the weekend liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Bob Goncalves.**

From Father Tom Bonacci, CPPS

Dear Friends,

The Board of Directors, Executive Director, and all at The Interfaith Peace Project are proud to stand in solidarity with the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. This is not a partisan campaign. It is about right and wrong. It is about alleviating the suffering and indignities of people of all ages, races, orientation, religions and philosophies.

Fifty years ago, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and many others called for a "revolution of values" in America. They invited people who had been divided to stand together against the "triplets of evil" - militarism, racism, and economic injustice - to insist that people need not die from poverty in the richest nation to ever exist. They sought to build a broad, fusion coalition that would audit

America. Sadly, support waned when Martin was assassinated. The call has been rising ever since.

In 2018, The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival has developed out of years of organizing across the United States. It is being led by the Repairers of the Breach, and Kairos - The Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice. In communities across this land, people impacted by systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy, and our distorted moral narrative have said the same thing: "We want to be free! We need a Poor People's Campaign! We need a Moral Revival to make this country great for so many for whom it has not yet been." This call echoes the cries of the prophets throughout the ages to stand up for justice and the dignity of all:

Isaiah 58 - If you remove the yoke from among you, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairers of the breach.

Qur'an 9:71 - The believers, both men and women, are in charge of and responsible for one another; they all enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong.

Luke 4:18-19 - The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent

me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, will begin a 40-day campaign on May 14, 2018. On six consecutive Mondays, people of peace will stand at state capitals throughout the United States, including the country's capital in Washington, D.C. There are 12 principles of the Poor People's Campaign. On each of the six Mondays, look for an email highlighting two.

If you wish to learn more or become involved, go to: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/> or search for Poor Peoples Campaign in your state. Let us know where and how you will participate and send us photos and reflections.

Declaration of Fundamental Rights and Poor People's Moral Agenda

Systemic Racism:

Did you know that there are fewer voting rights in 2018 than there were 50 years ago when the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act were passed?

Poverty and Inequality:

Did you know that while the U.S. economy has grown 18-fold in the past 50 years, wealth inequality has expanded, the costs of living have increased, and social programs have been restructured and cut dramatically?

Ecological Devastation:

Did you know 13.8 million U.S. households cannot afford water?

War Economy and Militarism:

Did you know that currently 53 cents of every federal discretionary dollar go to military spending and only 15 cents are spent on anti-poverty programs?

National Morality:

Did you know that thousands of people die every year from anti-poor policies, while an extremist religious and Christian nationalist agenda deliberately diverts attention from the key issues and challenges facing the majority of Americans?

Maya Angelou said: Do the best you can until you know better and when you know better, do better.

Peacefully,

Fr. Tom Bonacci, CPPS
Director, Interfaith Peace Center



Thank You

From Our Adopted Parochial School of St. Peter Martyr, Pittsburg

Dear Fr. Robert,

Thank you for the very generous financial gift of \$942.50 from the parish. What a tremendous Lenten Gift! This support for Catholic Education from your Holy Thursday Liturgy is truly a blessing. The joy and love that is experienced through your Lenten Alms outreach gives witness to the generous spirit of the parish. We are deeply

grateful for your financial and spiritual support and honored to be your “adopted” Catholic School.

On behalf of the students, families, faculty, and staff, I extend our sincere thanks and wish you continued blessings throughout the remainder of the Easter Season. You and all the parishioners are being remembered in our daily prayers of gratitude. We also pray that more families from your parish will choose to send their children to St. Peter Martyr School so we may partner with them in their children’s academic and spiritual development.

Respectfully yours in Christ,

Mr. Joe Siino, Principal

