

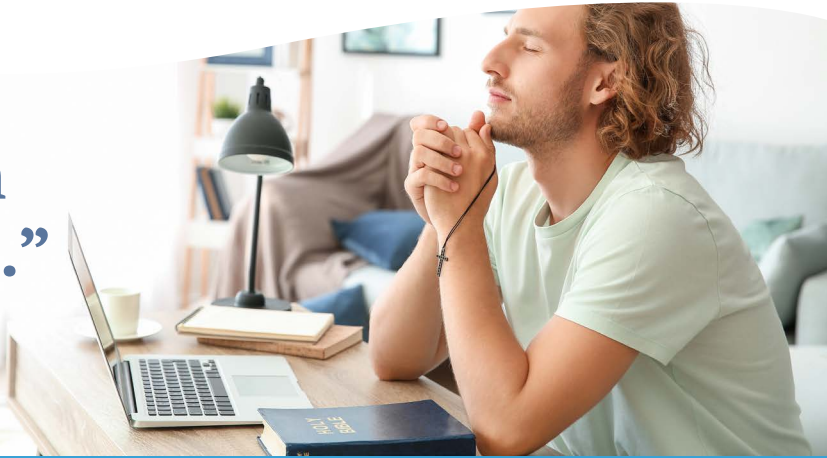
Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year B - 5th Sunday of Easter

A resource for personal, family and community prayer.

“remain
in me...”



LECTIO STEPS - The five 'Rs': *Reading, Recognising, Responding, Resting, Reflecting.*

Gospel: John 15:1-8

You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.

¹Jesus said to his disciples: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ²Every 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. ³You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Make 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.

⁵I 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. ⁶Anyone 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. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. ⁸It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.”

Reading

On the fifth and sixth Sundays of Easter, the reading is always an extract from John's Gospel, taken from the last conversation (farewell discourse) that Jesus had with his disciples in the Upper Room on the night before he died. Knowing his death is imminent, Jesus focuses on his close friendship with the disciples. He loves them and they love him. Therefore, they are a part of him and he is a part of them.

Living through him, with him and in him guarantees a fruitful future.

Recognising

Let this beautiful passage speak to your life experience – an event, happening or relationship where you have experienced something similar to that situation as described in the Gospel: be it in your own personal life, the life of others, the church, the country or the world (MEDITATION STAGE). Allow the memory and the passage to get to know each other and discover all that they have in common, until you feel to say, 'I recognize this passage!' This is truly Good News: the Risen Jesus is alive and at work among us, doing today what he did long ago.

“Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.”

Can you enter into the experience of Jesus by remembering and celebrating a deep friendship where you felt truly at home with one another, where you shared each other's joys and sorrows, hopes and fears? No matter

where you went, you were still together in spirit because this person had become a part of you and you a part of them.

“Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty”

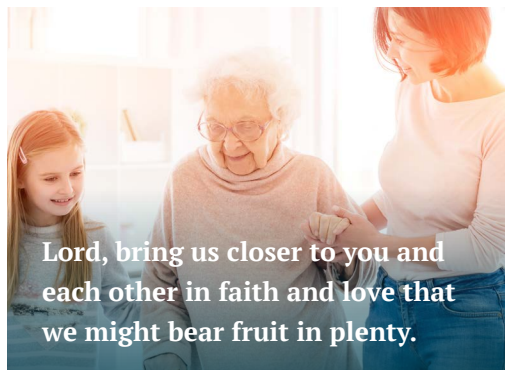
Can you enter into the experience of the disciples by remembering a close and intimate friendship that seemed to awaken and inspire so much that was good and beautiful in you?

“Every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more.”

Can you enter into the experience of the “pruned branches” by remembering an important relationship in your life that went through a difficult period? However, you remained faithful and worked hard at it and discovered a new springtime in that relationship, bearing fruit in all kinds of new ways.

“I am the vine, you are the branches.”

Can you enter into the passage by remembering experiences of community where there was a great sense of togetherness, our need of each other, and our shared hopes and dreams?



Lord, bring us closer to you and each other in faith and love that we might bear fruit in plenty.

Responding

Having recognised God's presence in life, you are invited to respond in your own words, in PRAYER (thanksgiving, repentance and petition). Below are sample prayers, please try to make your own specific to your meditation. In time you may feel to include in the prayer some words or phrases from the passage itself.

Lord, we thank you for those precious relationships in our lives where we have made our "home" in one another – where we "remain in each other's love" and are at our best. For "cut off" from each other we are like "dead branches." We thank you for the abundance of "fruit" that these friendships have borne in us and how your love has been manifested in us through them.

Lord, forgive us for the times when we have tended to be 'individualistic' in our thinking, in our prayer and in our work - when our ego took over and we lost sight of our need of the other and our need of you. We were like "branches that had been thrown away - we withered".

Lord, we ask you to deepen the bonds of love and friendship that bind us together. Bring us closer to you and each other in faith and love that we might bear fruit in plenty.



“Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty...”

Resting

You are invited to enter deep prayer by simply resting your heart in God's presence (CONTEMPLATIVE MOMENT). The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage might help you on this journey into greater silence and stillness e.g. “remain in me”.

Reflecting

From your journey with this passage, you are now invited to reflect, and put into your own words, any new insights or understanding that you have received (WISDOM MOMENT).

From your journey with this passage what

have you learnt about deep friendship, communion, community and human fulfilment?

True friendship means to dwell mutually in one another in a life-giving way.



Reading

Jesus encourages his friends to remain close to him. Jesus is the vine and his friends are called to be the branches that bear fruit in what they do and say. Jesus states that if their lives bear fruit then others will know that they are his true friends.

Recognising

Can you remember meeting a 'Jesus person', maybe a parent, grandparent or teacher, who was like "a vine" in your life, encouraging, energising and inspiring you?

Can you remember a time when you were a true friend of Jesus at home, in school or at your sports club, by speaking and acting with love?

Responding

Lord, I thank you for the 'Jesus people' who have encouraged, energised and inspired me to remain close to Jesus and believe in

Your plan for my life.

Lord, I am sorry for the times that my words and actions did not reflect Your call to be "a loving branch of Jesus" in my family, school and community.

Lord, I ask for the grace to remain close to Jesus so that people may hear what I say and see what I do and know that I am his true friend.

Resting

Take a few moments to breathe in the love of the Father by repeating "MAKE YOUR HOME IN ME" for as long as it is possible. May you know the joy that comes from resting in the presence of the Father.

Reflecting

Stay close to the people who encourage, energise and inspire you to bear fruit in how you love everyone you meet.