

MAY 2, 2021
Sunday of the 5th Week of Easter
John 15: 1-8

“BE ALWAYS CONNECTED WITH JESUS!”

“There’s a story of a native from a remote mountain village who had the opportunity to visit a large modern city for the first time. He could not bring much home with him, and he had little money. But he was amazed at the electric lights which he saw everywhere. So, he bought a sack full of electric lights bulbs and sockets with switches so he could turn them off and on. Arriving home, he hung the light bulbs in front of his home and on his and his neighbor’s trees. Everyone watched him with curiosity and asked him what he was doing, but he just smiled and said, “Just wait until dark--you’ll see.” When night came, he turned on the switches, but nothing happened. No one had told him about electricity. He did not know the light bulbs were useless unless connected to the source of their power.”¹

This is the central message of Jesus Christ to us: “Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”² This is a clear message that Christ is telling us, we need to be connected with Him so that we can bear fruit. Apart from Him, we are nothing.

The gospel for today was a very familiar story for Jesus’ listeners because there’s a lot of vineyard in the surrounding area. The people especially those who tend the vineyard knew what He is speaking about. This was their daily lives and work – planting, tending, pruning, cultivating, and harvesting the grapes in the vineyard.

¹ www.stories4homilies.co

² John 15: 4-5 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

Jesus compared Himself to a vine, and the fruit bearing are the disciples and followers of Him. The one who cultivates, waters, and tends the soil is God the Father. He also prunes the vines and get rid of the dead wood so that the vine is nourish, nurture, and sustain. “The vine is a plant whose branches form the whole; and the branches are only fruitful insofar as they are joined with the vine. This relationship is the secret of Christian life and John the Evangelist expresses this with the word ‘abide’, which is repeated seven times in today’s passage. “Abide in me”, says the Lord; abide in the Lord.”³ The Lord is telling His disciples and all of us, we need to receive strength, nourishment, and sustenance only from Him. Like the branches that break away from the vine, we will not be productive, will die and bear no fruit if we are not connected to Vine, Jesus Himself. Every one of us, Christian is distinct and yet the same. Our distinctiveness, uniqueness, and individuality are drawn from the Vine, from Christ Himself. We are identified with the Vine and receive our life, and sustenance from the Vine.

So, what the gospel is telling us to relate to Jesus because only in and through Him, we can be productive. Jesus is telling us bear fruit for the Kingdom of God and must cultivate our relationship with Him through the sacraments, prayers, and good deeds. According to Pope Francis: “When we are intimate with the Lord, as the vine and branches are intimate and joined, we are able to bear the fruits of new life, of mercy, of justice and peace, derived from the Lord’s Resurrection. It is what the Saints did, those who lived Christian life in fullness and lived the witness of charity, because they were true branches of the vine of the Lord. But ‘to be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious.... We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves’ (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 14). We are all called to be holy; we must be holy with this richness we have received from the Risen Lord. Every activity — work and rest, family and social life,

³ catholicstrivingforholiness.org

exercising political, cultural and economic responsibilities — every activity, whether small or great, if lived in union with Jesus and with the attitude of love and of service, is an occasion to live Baptism and Gospel holiness to the fullest.”⁴

My brothers and sisters, let us always be connected and linked with Jesus. Like our smart phones, internet, computers, and all gadgets that seem we are lifeless if not connected with these things. We spent a lot of time connecting and using these things, so, let us also be connected with Jesus all the time. His Wi-Fi, and link is unlimited, we will never be disconnected unless we are the one who will turn it off. Let us all be connected with Jesus always.

Let this be our prayer: "Lord Jesus, may I always be one and united with you in all that I say and do. May I be close to You and glorify you so that I may bear fruit for Your kingdom. Ignite and kindle my heart and mind with Your unending love and take away anything that would make me unproductive, or unfruitful. You are my Vine, my source of strength and life. May I never be apart from You. Amen."

⁴ ibid