

# LIVING FAITH

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 28, 2024

THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

John 15:1-8



“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. 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. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”



## REFLECTING ON THE GOSPEL

In the image of the vine and the branches, we see very clearly that our life comes from God. We are rooted in God, and planted in God. Everything that is good comes from God. And God offers to each one of us this special gift of life and in life. If only we accept God invitation, if only we surrender, God will work in us to produce even more fruit. But it can be hard for us to surrender to God. We like to go our own way, do our own thing, be in control. If we let God take control, abundant life is possible. God will abide in us. Picture that! Imagine that wonderful gift of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, abiding in us, and we in God. That's the promise of Jesus. If we abide in God, God will abide in us. And surrendering to living in that kind of love will change the world.



## TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- What does it mean to you, to “abide in God”? What would change if you surrendered and gave yourself completely to that kind of love?
- What makes this kind of relationship with God difficult?
- What would you be doing differently if you acted like a branch on God's vine?

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# The True Vine

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.," John 15:5 (NIV)



The puzzle is based on John 15:1-8

*The words below have been written in code. Use the hints in the decoder at the top of the page to help break the code (the letters on top are the correct answers, the letters on the bottom are the code). Write the correct word on the line provided beside each code word.*

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 16-18-21-14-5-19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 22-9-14-5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 20-18-21-5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7-1-18-4-5-14-5-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6-18-21-9-20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2-5-1-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 18-5-13-1-9-14 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2-18-1-14-3-8-5-19 \_\_\_\_\_

PRUNES FRUIT	VINE BEAR	TRUE REMAIN	GARDENER BRANCHES
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# SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

## CONTINUING TO EXPLORE THE SYNTHESIS REPORT

### LOOKING AT CHAPTER 10- CONVERGENCES

#### CONSECRATED LIFE AND LAY ASSOCIATIONS AND MOVEMENTS: A CHARISMATIC SIGN

##### PART II – ALL DISCIPLES, ALL MISSIONARIES

##### 10. Consecrated Life and Lay Associations and Movements: A Charismatic Sign

The Church has always benefitted from the gift of **charisms**, be it from the most extraordinary to the simplest. Through them the **Holy Spirit rejuvenates** and **renews** the Church with joy and gratitude. The **Holy People of God** recognise in these charisms the providential help with which God himself sustains, directs and illuminates **His mission**.



The diverse families that compose religious life demonstrate the **beauty of discipleship** and **holiness** in Christ, whether in their distinctive forms of **prayer**, their **service** among the people, whether through forms of **community life**, the solitude of the contemplative life or at the frontier of new cultures. Those in **consecrated life** have often been the first to sense important historical changes and to heed the promptings of the Spirit. Today, too, the **Church** needs their **prophetic voice** and **action**.



The **Christian community** also recognises and wishes to be attentive to the **practices of synodal life** and **discernment** that have been tried and **tested** in communities of consecrated life, maturing over the centuries. We know that we can learn from them **wisdom** in how to walk the **synodal path**.



Many **Congregations** and **Institutes** practice **Conversation in the Spirit** or similar **forms of discernment** in the conduct of provincial and general chapters, in order to renew structures, **rethink lifestyles**, and activate innovative forms of service and proximity to the poorest. In other cases, however, we find the persistence of an **authoritarian style**, which makes no room for dialogue.

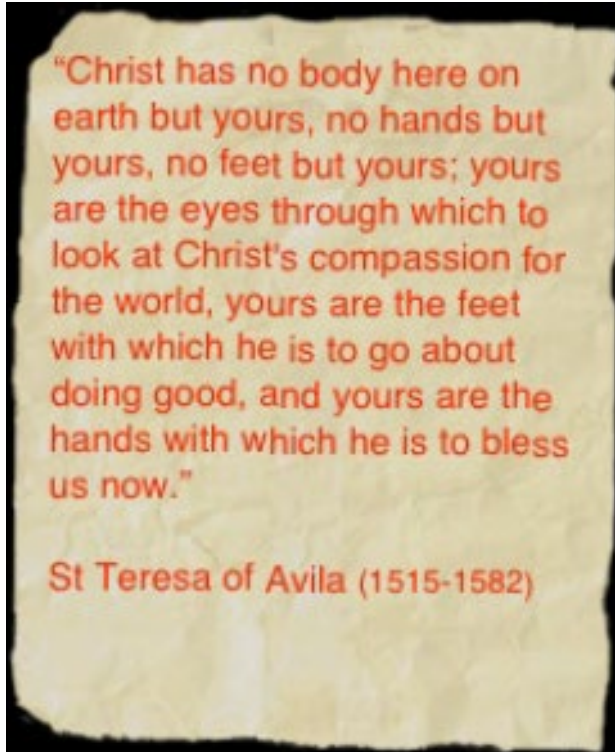


**Lay associations, ecclesial movements** and **new communities** are a precious sign of the maturation of the **co-responsibility of all the baptized**. They hold particular value because of their experience in promoting **communion** among different vocations, the impetus with which they proclaim the Gospel, their proximity to those on the margins economically and socially and through their promotion of the common good. They are often **models** of synodal **communion** and of **participation** for **mission**.



Cases of **abuse** of various kinds experienced by those in religious life and members of lay associations, especially of women, signal **a problem** in the exercise of authority and demand decisive and **appropriate interventions**.

## CHRIST'S HANDS AND FEET A TREASURE FROM OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE



St. Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582) is probably the female saint and mystic with the greatest influence in the world. She entered and reformed the Carmelite Order, and established small convents throughout Spain. She traveled on foot, and thus became called the "walking" ("andariega") saint.

She taught her nuns to think and pray on their own, and to concentrate in order to hear the Lord in their interior, in what she called the "Interior Castle." She always abandoned herself to God's will, and often used to say, "I am yours, Lord; I was born for You. What do you want from me?"

Teresa suffered greatly from illnesses, and is patron saint of those who suffer from headaches.

In 1970, together with Saint Catherine of Siena, she was declared a Doctor of the Church.