

# SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



## To Bear Fruit

Father,  
you tend to the vine,  
caring for it with incredible gentleness.  
Each branch is beloved;  
each branch is protected;  
each branch is filled with your life.  
Fill us with your Spirit that we might

remain in you and you in us.  
Grant that we bear fruit,  
bringing you to others  
so that your joy might be in us  
and our joy might be complete.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 9, 2021  
Bearing Fruit



*Today's readings: Acts 10:25–26, 34–35, 44–48; Psalm 98:1, 2–3, 3–4; 1 John 4:7–10; John 15:9–17.* Jesus tells his disciples, “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.” Today’s Gospel continues last week’s reading about the vine grower and the true vine. As we reflect on the true vine, we might consider our responsibility to bear fruit in our lives.

Throughout Jesus’ earthly life, everything he said and did pointed to the kingdom of God. If we model our lives on him, they also will point to the kingdom. But what does it mean to “go out and bear fruit”? To bear fruit requires turning away from all that is darkness, all that is not God, so that we might participate in the light fully. In the light of God’s

love, we acknowledge our friendship with Jesus and are empowered to take up our cross and follow Jesus.

What is the sign that we have remained in Christ’s love? It is that our joy is complete. Joy is unlike worldly happiness, which can depend on external conditions. Joy endures throughout difficulty, since our hope is in Jesus.

How might we bear fruit and keep Jesus’ commandments? What does he command? Love as I love. How do we do it? We lay down our life. Jesus expresses it simply, yet it is not easy. And so he invites us. He invites us to remain in his love so that his life will be within us and we will be able to love as he does. He invites us into the relationship that gives us the ability to bear fruit.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

**Monday, May 10**

### St. Damien of Molokai

St. Damien ministered to the people of Hawaii, including people who had leprosy. He eventually contracted the disease, realizing he was infected when he did not feel pain when boiling water was poured on his hand. St. Damien is a model of self-sacrifice and service to those at the margins of society. Who is at the margins of our culture? How are you called to step out of your comfort zone to serve them? *Today's readings: Acts 16:11–15; Psalm 149:1b–2, 3–4, 5–6a and 9b; John 15:26–16:4a.*

**Tuesday, May 11**

### A Living Vine

Placing a living vine in your prayer area may help you reflect on the vine and the branches. Watching the growth, consider how the plant is connected, how the life within it is the same. Imagine all those in heaven and on earth, united through Jesus as part of the true vine. *Today's readings: Acts 16:22–34; Psalm 138:1–2ab, 2cde–3, 7c–8; John 16:5–11.*

**Wednesday, May 12**

### Paul at the Areopagus

When Paul preaches at the Areopagus, he is participating in the mission that Jesus gave him. He is preaching the Good News to all nations. He is also giving us a model. He sees the shrine to the Unknown God and realizes that the Athenians, though they did not know it, already were called into relationship with the one God, the God of Israel. We too know that God calls all people into relationship. Sometimes when we are in dialogue with people who hold beliefs different from ours or people who profess no belief at all, it is helpful to remember that God is already in relationship with them and to strive for common ground and respectful engagement. *Today's readings: Acts 17:15, 22–18:1; Psalm 148:1–2, 11–12, 13, 14; John 16:12–15.*

**Thursday, May 13**

### The Ascension of the Lord

The Ascension is a feast of joy, joy in the Father glorifying Jesus. It is also a feast of anticipation, because we hope that we too will be raised. We hope that by believing in Jesus and by living in imitation of him, we too might be citizens of heaven. *Today's readings: Acts 1:1–11; Psalm 47:2–3, 6–7, 8–9; Ephesians 4:1–13; Mark 16:15–20.*

### Our Lady of Fatima

The optional memorial of Our Lady of Fatima is celebrated today in dioceses that will observe the Ascension on Sunday. Look up instructions or a video online, and make one or more knotted rosaries. Making rosaries is also a way to interest children in this devotion to the Blessed Mother. *Today's readings: Acts 18:1–8; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; John 16:16–20.*

**Friday, May 14**

### St. Matthias

In selecting a person to replace Judas, the community wanted to choose from among those who had been present from Jesus' baptism in the Jordan through his passion. Do you think that Matthias felt ready or worthy? Do you always feel ready for what God is calling you to do? Can Matthias' example help you to remember that God gives us what we need to respond in love to our call? *Today's readings: Acts 1:15–17, 20–26; Psalm 113:1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8; John 15:9–17.*

**Saturday, May 15**

### Plant a Mary Garden

Consider planting a Mary garden. This garden can be small enough for an apartment or larger for a yard. If plenty of space is available, rose bushes, hydrangeas, and larger plants can be planted. For those with smaller spaces, a container garden or a terracotta bowl can be just as lovely a way to honor Mary. Marigolds, bachelor's buttons, petunias, and pansies are among the plants people have used to honor Mary. *Today's readings: Acts 18:23–28; Psalm 47:2–3, 8–9, 10; John 16:23b–28.*

