

Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 29, 2018

Father Cantalamessa on Pruning

In his teaching, Jesus often begins with things that are familiar to those listening to him, things that everyone could see. This time he speaks to us with the image of the vine and the branches. Jesus sets forth two situations. The first is negative: The branch is dry, it bears no fruit, and so it is cut off and thrown away. The second is positive: The branch is living and healthy, and so it is pruned.

This contrast already tells us that pruning is not a hostile act to the branch. The vinedresser expects much from it; he knows it can bear fruit; he has confidence in it. The same happens on the spiritual plane. God intervenes in our lives with the cross. It does not mean he is irritated with us but, in fact, the opposite. But, why does the vinedresser prune the branch and make the vine "weep," as is usually said. For a very simple reason: If it is not pruned, the strength of the vine is wasted; it will bear perhaps more bunches than it should, with the consequence that not all will ripen and that the rating of the wine will be lower. If it remains a long time without being pruned, the vine even becomes wild and produces only vine tendrils and wild grapes.

The same happens in our lives. To live is to choose, and to choose is to deny oneself. The person who wants to do too many things in life, or cultivates innumerable interests and hobbies, is dispersed, and will not be outstanding in anything. One must have the courage to make choices, to put some secondary interests to one side to concentrate on the primary. To prune!

This is even truer in the spiritual life. Holiness is like a sculpture. Leonardo da Vinci defined sculpture as "the art of removing." The other arts consist in adding something: color to the canvas in painting, stone on stone in architecture, note after note in music. Only sculpture consists of removing, of taking away the pieces of marble that are in excess, so that the figure can emerge that one has in mind. Christian perfection is also obtained like this, by removing and making useless pieces fall off, namely, desires, ambitions, projects, carnal tendencies that disperse us and do not let us finish anything. One day, Michelangelo walking through a garden in Florence saw a block of marble in a corner protruding from the earth, half covered by grass and mud. He stopped suddenly, as if he had seen someone, and turning to friends, who were with him, exclaimed: "An angel is imprisoned in that marble; I must get him out." And, armed with a chisel, he began to work on that block until the figure of a beautiful angel emerged.

God also looks at us and sees us this way: as shapeless blocks of stone. He then says to himself: "Therein is hidden a new and beautiful creature that waits to come out to the light; more than that, the image of my own son Jesus Christ is hidden there, I want to bring it out!" We are predestined to "be conformed to the image of his son" (Romans 8:29). Then, what does He do? He takes the chisel, which is the cross, and begins to work on us. He takes the pruning shears, and begins to prune us.

We must not worry ourselves thinking of what terrible crosses he may send us! Normally, he does not add anything to what life presents us in terms of suffering, effort, tribulations. He makes all these things serve for our purification. He helps us to not waste them.

Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household
(Translation by Zenit)

DAILY MASS READINGS

- Monday:** *Easter Weekday*
Acts of the Apostles 14:5-18; John 14:21-26
- Tuesday:** *Easter Weekday*
Acts of the Apostles 14:19-28; John 14:27-31a
- Wednesday:** *Saint Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church (Memorial)*
Acts of the Apostles 15:1-6; John 15:1-8
- Thursday:** *Saints Philip and James, Apostles (Feast)*
1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 14:6-14
- Friday:** *Easter Weekday*
Acts of the Apostles 15:22-31; John 15:12-17
- Saturday:** *Easter Weekday*
Acts of the Apostles 16:1-10; John 15:18-21
- Sunday:** *Sixth Sunday of Easter*
Acts of the Apostles 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48;
John 15:9-17

This Week's Program Schedule

Monday, April 30

8:00AM	Mass	Church
8:30AM	Bible Study	Lounge
6:00PM	Adoration/Reconciliation	Church

Tuesday, May 1

8:00AM	Mass	Church
6:30PM	Squires	Lounge

Wednesday, May 2

1:00PM	Mass @ CSUS	Bizini Hall, Rm 245
4:00-5:00PM	1 st Session CRE	Church
5:15-6:30PM	2 nd Session CRE	Church
5:15-6:30PM	1 st Communion Practice	Church
6:45-8:00PM	3 rd Session CRE	Church

Thursday, May 3

Friday, May 4

4:30PM	Mass	Church
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Saturday, May 5

3:30PM	Reconciliation	Church
5:00PM	Mass	Church

Sunday, May 6

9:00AM	Mass	Church
9:00AM	Children's Liturgy	Conf. Rm
10:00AM	Hospitality	Lobby
11:30AM	1 st Communion Mass	Church
6:00PM	Mass	Church

Something for our Children!

Can you unscramble the following words from today's Gospel?

NIEV	RREOGW	HNRBAC
TUIFR	RHTEIW	EIFR

Answers on the next page→

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Give back to the Lord a sacrifice, a share of what the Lord has so generously given to you.

Sunday's Offertory: \$ 6,500.52

God bless you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

5:00PM Saturday, April 28 Eleanor Ferreira
9:00AM Sunday, April 29 Sang Pham†
6:00PM Sunday, April 29 All Saints Community
8:00AM Monday, April 30 Future Generational Grace
8:00AM Tuesday, May 1 Forgotten Souls in Purgatory†
4:30PM Friday, May 4 Carrie Lazaro-Pescadero†

SPECIAL THANKS AND WELCOME to Fr. Joseph Thottudakavil from St. Patrick's Church in Sonora for presiding at our Saturday evening mass and our Sunday morning mass. God bless you!

NEXT WEEKEND'S 2ND COLLECTION will be for the benefit of our *Building Fund*. God bless you for your generosity.

CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH: Did you know? Safe Environment training is taking place in all dioceses of the United States. Over 2 million clergy, employees, and volunteers have been trained to prevent and respond to the abuse of children.

BISHOP BLAIRE'S RETIREMENT SALE: Bishop Blaire has a lifetime accumulation of cool stuff: artwork, religious items, books, furniture and lots more. The sale will take place at Presentation Church in the St. Francis Room at 1515 Benjamin Holt Drive, Stockton on **Sunday, May 20 at 8am-5pm**. The Holy Grounds and the cozy coffee shop (next door to the St. Francis Room) will be open all day. All proceeds benefit seminarian education.

"CHANGE FOR LIFE" BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN: Turlock Pregnancy and Health Center offers free pregnancy tests, sonograms, and information to help those facing an unplanned pregnancy. The goal is to educate, equip, and empower individuals to make life-affirming choices. **Pick up your baby bottle on Mother's Day, May 13th (1 bottle per family please), fill it with coins, cash or check and return it on or before Father's Day, June 17.** For more information, go to www.turlockphc.com.

A WORD FROM BISHOP COTTA

As you, the faithful of the Diocese of Stockton, continue to answer the call of the Gospel to be "missionary disciples," I would like to extend my gratitude to all who have generously supported the special "2nd Collections" that are taken up during the year. The Diocese of Stockton has recently received letters of appreciation from the following organizations for 2017:

Pontifical Mission Societies in the US
(Propagation of the Faith): \$70,330.40
Retirement Fund for Religious Collection: \$79,230.17
Catholic Near East Welfare Association: \$ 7,728.62
Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land
(Good Friday Collection): \$ 3,037.73

These donations will help these organizations to continue to do God's work of evangelization throughout the world. Again, thank you for your generosity! May God bless you with his "grace and mercy."

In the Peace of Christ,
Bishop Myron J. Cotta

SPECIAL PRAYERS

Please pray for our sick community members and friends:

Gustavo Delgadillo	Socorro Aguilar	Ed H
Peggy Howard	Carol Parks	Tom Abram
Cecilia Renenger	Linda Seymour	Stephen...
Jim Perdomo	Flynn Hillman	Janet Fiorini
Katarina Renenger	Anthony Farinha	Shelly...
Vicky Lorenz	Tim Grahm	Karen ...
Cynthia Basco	Jackie Ferreira	Jacki...
Richard Lopes	Lillian Lopez	Sharon...
Patti & Tom Scott	Charles W.	Ed Rocha
Carol Patterson	Catherine Harris	William Jackson
Joanne Mattos	Isabel Rodriguez	Edward Lytle
Bishop Stephen Blaire	Rozeo Lopez	Kevin Downs
Ruby Summerlin	June Zuniga	Raul Campusano
Maria Ortega	Rita Yonan	Taylor Holt
Ray Morris	Teresa Diamond	Geralyn Weston
Russell Van Hook	Harry Sullivan	Sara Serpa
Pam Youngdale	Gary Winkleman	Infant Rosie
Cliff Bentley	Giovanni Sahagun	Joe O. Brasil
Ramin O.	Suzanne L.	Caroline B.
Pierre...	Romina Y.	Ernestina Padilla
Sam Carnemolla	Jaimie...	Frank Machado
Debbie Silva	Carter Gomes	Keely Gomes
Henrietta Webb	Doree O'Connell	

Your special prayers for these and others suffering from illness are gratefully appreciated. Thank you and God bless you!

Notify the office if you have anyone you would like to place on our list of persons in need of prayer due to illness. So that space will always be available for your loved ones, names will be kept on our list for three months. (However, your prayer requests can be renewed.)

CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (CSA)

Friday, April 27—Sunday, April 29: Resurrection, Spring Retreat. Please pray for our college students as they attend their retreat at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mission of St. Patrick, Sonora.

Monday, April 30: Rosary on Campus, meet at the CSA table in the quad @ 3:30pm.

As always, all college students are welcome and encouraged to attend all meetings and events!

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CRE)

1st Communion Practice, 5:15PM, Wednesday, May 2: There will be mandatory practice for all students receiving their 1st Holy Communion on Wednesday, May 2 at 5:15PM.

1st Communion Mass: The All Saints 1st Communion Mass will be held on **Sunday, May 6 at 11:30AM.**

RCIA

Any adult wishing to embrace the Catholic faith or any Catholic wishing to be confirmed should contact Michael Fuller by calling the church office at 669-0473.

This week's helpers include ...

Altar Linens ~ Connie Butler

Thank you and God bless you for your unselfish service!

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS: VINE, GROWER, BRANCH, FRUIT, WITHER, FIRE. How did you do?

TIPS FOR TITHING

...give abundantly, sacrificially, and cheerfully...Give in the spirit of prayer and of moral obligation—**joyful**—as we thank God for his provision and the privilege of helping others in need.