

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 8:26–40

1 John 4:1–11 (12–21)

John 15:1–8

Jesus Christ Is the True Vine Who Bears Much Fruit in Us

“*God is Love,*” and He has manifested Himself to us by sending “*His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him*” (1 John 4:9, 16). By the ministry of the Gospel, “*He has given us of His Spirit,*” so that we also believe and confess “*that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.*” In this way we “*abide in Him and He in us,*” and we “*love one another*” (1 John 4:2, 7, 13). Such divine love is exemplified in Philip’s preaching of “*the good news about Jesus*” to the Ethiopian eunuch. And when “*they came to some water,*” the eunuch was baptized into the very Gospel that Philip had preached (Acts 8:35–38). That Ethiopian was thereby grafted into “*the true Vine,*” Jesus Christ (John 15:1), just as we are. Already we are clean because of the Word that Christ has spoken to us and by the washing of water with His Word. We now abide in Him by faith in His forgiveness. As He abides in us, both body and soul, with His own Body and His Blood, He “*bears much fruit*” in us (John 15:3–5).

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021

INTROIT

Psalm 145:1-2, 8, 10, 21; Antiphon: John 16:16

*A little while, and you will see me no longer;
and again a little while, and you will see me.
I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
Every day I will bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.
The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your saints shall bless you!
My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.*



**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*A little while, and you will see me no longer;
and again a little while, and you will see me.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *O God,
You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will.
Grant that we may love what You have commanded
and desire what You promise,
that among the many changes of this world
our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found;
through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

G *♪[Amen]♪*

GRADUAL

adapt. From Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

*Christ has risen from the dead.
[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor,
He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
he has put all things under his feet.*

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*
G **hear our prayer.**

Acts 8:26-40 (ESV)

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert place. ²⁷ And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter

and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,

so he opens not his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁸ And he

commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

1 John 4:1-21 (ESV)

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. ⁴ Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In

this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

John 15:1-8 (ESV)

[Jesus said:] "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

May 9: The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:34-48; Psalm 98 (v.2); 1 John 5:1-8; John 15:9-17