

Readings + The Fifth Sunday of Easter, year B + April 28, 2024

Prayer of the Day

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

First Reading Acts 8:26-40

²⁶An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷So Philip got up and went.

Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"

³⁸The eunuch commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

³⁹When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more and went on his way rejoicing.

⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Psalmody Psalm 22:25-31

From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those
who fear the LORD.

**The poor shall eat and be satisfied, Let those
who seek the LORD give praise! May your
hearts live forever!**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn
to the LORD; all the families of nations shall
bow before God.

**For dominion belongs to the LORD, who rules
over the nations.**

Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down
in worship; all who go down to the dust, though
they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to
come.**

They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people
yet unborn, saying to them, "The LORD has
acted!"

Second Reading 1 John 4:7-21

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent into the world God's only Son so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent the Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved,

since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and God's love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in God and God in us, because we have been given of God's own Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as the Son is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love ¹⁹We love because God first loved us.

²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate a member of the community are liars, for those who do not love a person, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.

²¹The commandment we have from God is this: those who love God must love the members of the family also.

Holy Gospel John 15:1-8

Only John gives us these words of Jesus regarding the vine and the branches.

¶Jesus said to the disciples:¶ ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ²My Father removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit my Father prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide 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. ⁵I 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. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."