

Our Lady of the Desert



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Padre: Victor C. Yakubu,
Administrador Parroquial

Padre: Julius Kayiwa, Vicario Parroquial
Confesión el Sábado:
Por cita en (Español y Inglés)

Rosario el Sábado: Y Letanías de la Santísima
Virgen Maria—3:20pm

Misa el Sábado: (Vigilia) / Inglés 4:00 p.m.

Rosario el Domingo: Y Letanías de la Santísima
Virgen Maria— 9:40am

Misa el Domingo: Español /10:00 a.m.

Liturgia en los Días de la Semana

Cada Día a las Doce: Angelus/Regina Caeli

Lunes: Adoración 7:30am y Misa a las 8:00am

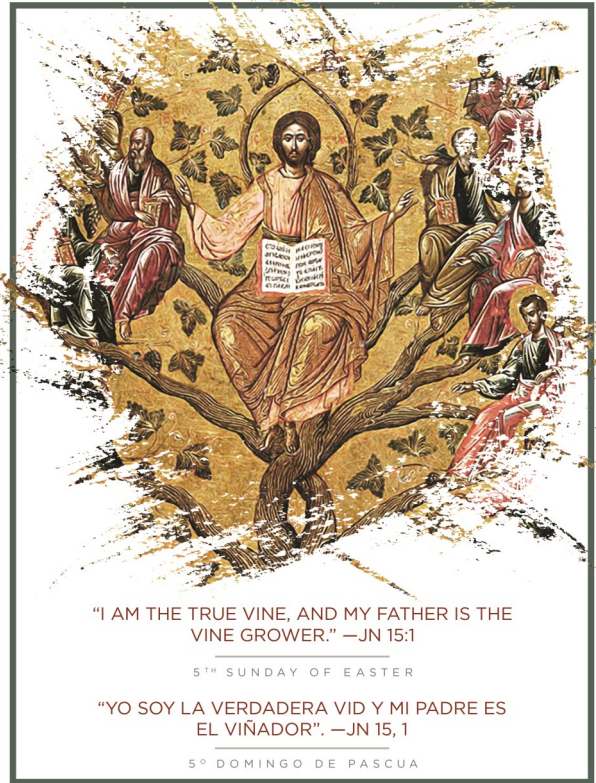
Martes, Miércoles Jueves, Viernes:

Adoración 7:30am y Misa 8:00am

Viernes:

Sábado: Adoración: 7:30am y a las 8:00am

Misa en Honor de Virgen María



April 28th, 2024

Rev. Victor C. Yakubu, Parochial Administrator
Rev. Julius Kayiwa, Parochial Vicar

Confession on Saturday:

By appointment English/Spanish

Saturday Rosary: With Litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary - 3:20pm

Saturday Mass (Vigil): English -4:00 p.m.

Sunday Rosary: With Litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary—9:40am

Sunday Mass: Spanish 10:00am

Liturgy of the Weekdays

Every day at Noon: Angelus/Regina Caeli

Monday: 7:30am Adoration & Mass 8:00am

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday:

Adoration 7:30am & Mass 8:00am

Friday:

Saturday: Adoration: 7:30 a.m. & 8:00 a.m. Mass
In Honor of the Virgin Mary

Reflection for Fifth Sunday of Easter : Year B
Fifth Sunday of Easter – April 28, 2024
Fr. Matthew Duclos

Readings: Acts 9:26–31 • Psalm 22:26–27, 28, 30, 31–32 • 1 John 3:18–24 • John 15:1–8 bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/042824.cfm Father who is the vine grower, and thus we should never depart from Jesus the vine.

Thinking back to when our neophytes were catechumens prior to the Easter Vigil, I always appreciate hearing their stories about how they came to the Catholic faith. For some, it was a spiritual conversion, maybe witnessing a healing or being directed in prayer. For others, it may have been more intellectual, asking questions and investigating the answers, leading them to the truths of the faith. Either way, the Holy Spirit's presence is quite apparent whenever we examine the trajectories of these individuals.

And when people came into the faith, they ultimately had to give up something. Maybe they gave up a particular denomination as they entered the Catholic Church. Maybe they gave up a disbelief in God, or gave up an ignorance of Christ. Maybe they gave up a sinful behavior and took on a spiritual devotion.

Making a decision to go in one direction naturally means making a decision not to go in any number of other directions. Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken" comes to mind immediately. When we choose to come to church to worship God and receive Jesus through the Scriptures and in the Eucharist, we are choosing not to ignore Jesus. In that sense, we are choosing to remain on the branch of Christ, remain connected to him so we can grow and be nurtured from him.

The first reading from Acts concludes with an encouraging statement: "the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria was at peace. It was being built up and walked in the fear of the Lord, and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit it grew in numbers." We did indeed see our Church and our parishes grow in numbers at the Easter Vigil as people were baptized and confirmed into the faith. Through these sacraments, especially through the Eucharist, those people connected themselves to the vine of Christ.

The initial connection to the branch, although a critically important step, is far from the last step. Each and every day we must *remain* on the branch, remain on the vine, because Jesus says, "Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit." Jesus never departed from God the

The question of how to remain steadfastly connected to the vine of Christ is one that often occupies the hearts and minds of believers. John offers a clear answer in the second reading, emphasizing the importance of obedience to God's commandments as the key to abiding in Christ. By conscientiously adhering to the teachings and example set forth by Jesus, and by partaking in the spiritual nourishment provided through the sacrament of the Eucharist, we solidify our connection to the vine. It is through these intentional actions that we cultivate a deep and enduring relationship with Christ, allowing his life-giving presence to permeate every aspect of our being.

The Church, as the mystical body of Christ, experiences continual growth and renewal with each passing day. This growth is not merely numerical but is also characterized by an ever-deepening spiritual connection among its members. As more individuals actively seek the grace and guidance offered through the sacraments, they are drawn into the loving embrace of the vine, finding sustenance and strength in their union with Christ. Moreover, as new souls are engrafted into the vine through baptism and conversion, the Church expands its reach, encompassing an ever-widening circle of believers. The ongoing building up of the Church is not merely a static process but a dynamic journey of spiritual transformation, wherein each member contributes to the flourishing of the body as a whole.

Granted, we're a long way from next year's Easter Vigil, but that shouldn't stop us for praying for those will become connected to Christ and his Church next year. Just think of the countless number of baptisms that will also happen between then and now, each one a new leaf on the vine of Christ. And although we may not yet know their names, we may not yet know their stories, God already does and the Holy Spirit is at work, nourishing us, keeping us connected to Christ.

*Fr. Victor is scheduled
To be at “Our Lady of the Desert”
the 4th Sunday of every month. (Dates are subject to change)*



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

My friend and fellow pastor, Father Paul, noticed unsightly, overgrown trees near his parish church. He asked the maintenance crew to cut back the growth, which they happily did, telling him the trees would be much healthier and even fuller after a good pruning. A few days later, Father Paul received a letter from an irate man in the neighborhood who wrote, “Jesus would never prune trees like that. He loves trees, unlike you.”

I suspect that the neighbor was not familiar with this week’s Gospel in which Jesus says of his Father, **“He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.”** (John 15:2) I don’t mean to pick too much on that fellow. He was perhaps ignorant of arboriculture. But I’d wager his main confusion was the pruning and removing quality of God’s love. That confusion afflicts us all to some degree, doesn’t it? It is just so darn easy to react negatively when God cuts something out of our lives and assume it’s not his work at all. In the moment, all we see is the loss, and not the loving desire for future flourishing.

The cross is the great pruning of Christ’s body. Jesus’ rising is the brand-new growth. It is God’s promise to us that all the painful pruning in life is leading us somewhere beautiful. What has been cut back or out in your life? A friend, an opportunity, a sense of certainty, a job, health, a relationship? This week, offer those dry branches to the one who lovingly prunes us in order to make our lives burst with verdant growth.

— Father John Muir

Readings for the week of April 28, 2024

Sunday:

Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32
(26a)/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8

Monday:

Acts 14:5-18/Ps 115:1-2, 3-4, 15-16/
Jn 14:21-26

Tuesday:

Acts 14:19-28/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21/
Jn 14:27-31a

Wednesday:

Acts 15:1-6/Ps 122: 1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5/
Jn 15:1-8

Thursday:

Acts 15:7-21/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 10/
Jn 15:9-11

Friday:

1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5/Jn 14:6-14

Saturday:

Acts 16:1-10/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 5/Jn 15:18-21

Next Sunday:

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48/Ps 98:1, 2-3,
3-4 (see 2b)/1 Jn 4:7-10/Jn 15:9-17

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

Then Barnabas took charge of him and brought him to the apostles, and he reported to them how he had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken to him. (Acts 9:27)

Psalm:

I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people. (Ps 22)
Or: Alleluia.

Second Reading:

And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. (1 Jn 3:23)

Gospel:

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5)

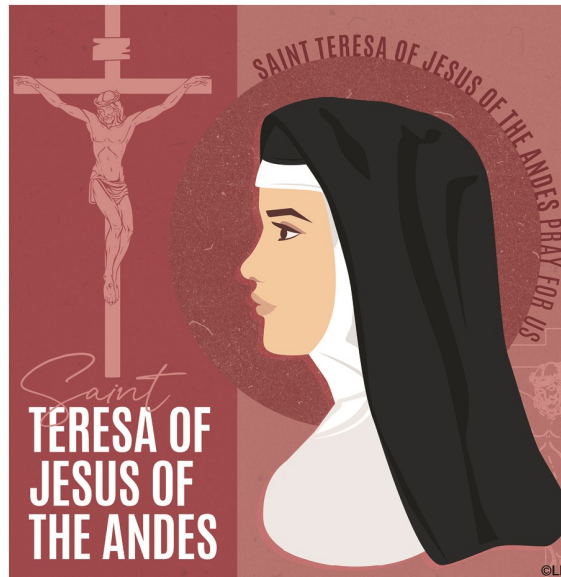
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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

Every Christian is a vine awaiting the loving attention of our gardener to prune and perfect us, to remove the parts of ourselves that are dead so that the fruitful parts burst forth with life. Trust the wisdom of the gardener. He alone can make us bloom.

Observances for the week of April 28, 2024

- Sunday:** 5th Sunday of Easter
Monday: St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church
Tuesday: St. Pius V, Pope
Wednesday: St. Joseph the Worker
Thursday: St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church; National Day of Prayer
Friday: Sts. Philip and James, Apostles
Next Sunday: 6th Sunday of Easter



Saint of the week

St. Teresa of Jesus of the Andes was a teenage Chilean Carmelite novitiate. Although she died of typhoid when she was 19, she proved that one's life doesn't have to be particularly long and filled with lofty accomplishments to be an amazing example of the love of Christ.

Prayer of Fruitfulness

God in Heaven,
Your grace surrounds us every day as we seek to live and move and grow in You. Prune the spaces in our lives that distract us from You! Plant Your word more deeply within us!
Amen.

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Love in Deed

It's a Wonderful Life is one of my favorite Christmas movies. It only occurred to me recently, though, that this film, for all its yuletide aesthetic, is actually more of an Easter story.

I love this movie because it's a very Catholic film — not overtly, although we do see the main character, George Bailey, going to Mass. No, it's the themes that are Catholic, not the set dressing. It's a story about the choices we make — to love, or not to love? To sacrifice, or not to sacrifice? To put oneself first, or to put oneself last? It's a story about what the consequences of those choices look like here in the world, and what they look like in heaven.

In the film, we meet a young George Bailey who dreams of growing up to do amazing, impressive things. Over the years, he makes a choice here and he makes a choice there ... and when all is said and done, the adult George Bailey is a tired, overworked husband and father with no worldly attributes that anyone would envy.

But he's a man who has loved in deed, not just in word, and who has reaped the spiritual rewards of those choices.

The season of Easter is about rejoicing in true redemption, not in worldly triumph. The Word of God is not a bedtime story. It's a pruning shear. To hear it is to be changed, to be shaped. To live it is to lose some things, so that you might bloom in unexpected ways. To welcome the Word is to be willing to look different, to feel different.

Anyone can say, "I love you, I accept you, I want to help you." But what does it actually look like, to love in deed and not just in word? It looks like giving something up: free time, wealth, comfort, worldly approval. It looks, to the casual observer, like pain.

To someone who has no concept of how plants grow and thrive, a gardener's pruning shears look like an executioner's sword. To someone who has no concept of how souls grow and thrive, a tomb barred by a stone looks like the end of a story, when in fact it's just the beginning.

"Children, let us love not in word or speech, but in deed and truth." — 1 John 3:18

- Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that? Catholic Life Explained

Question:

How does a person become a canonized saint?

Answer:

It is important to remember that all the saints are people, real people who lived just as we do! The first saints of the Church were martyrs or theologians known for a holy life. Over time, the Church has established a set process to investigate the causes of saints.

After a holy person's death, the bishop of their diocese initiates the canonization process with the Vatican. Typically, they must wait five years to ensure any false enthusiasm has lessened. With Vatican approval, the process begins and the person receives the title "Servant of God." The first phase involves collecting information about the person's life and scrutinizing it carefully. One person has the specific role of raising doubts — this is the origin of the phrase "devil's advocate!" When it is clear the person truly lived a heroically holy life according to Church teaching, they are declared "Venerable."

If the person is a martyr for the faith, they will also be declared "Blessed." If the person is not a martyr, they must be credited with a miracle. This is also closely examined for authenticity. Once the miracle is authenticated as truly a miracle performed by God through the person or through their intercession, they are beatified. An additional authenticated miracle is required before canonization, and we can call them "Saint."

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