



CELEBRATING AT HOME
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Jesus true vine; through fellowship with him
the branches bear much fruit (John 15:1-8)*



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

We are gathered with the whole Church in this moment of prayer.

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,
you are our Way.

Lord Jesus,
you are our Truth.

Lord Jesus,
You are our Life.

Risen Christ,
give us the courage and strength we need
to be your living presence in the world.
Amen.

Scripture Reading (*John 15:1-8*)

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘I am the true vine,
and my Father is the vinedresser.
Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away,
and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to
make it bear even more.
You are pruned already, by means of the word that I
have spoken to you.

Make your home in me as I make mine in you.
As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,
but must remain part of the vine,
neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.
Those who abide in me, and I in them,
bear fruit in plenty;
for cut off from me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown
away like a branch and withers; these branches are
collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,
you may ask what you will and you shall get it.
It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear
much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.

Reflection - *Jesus, true Vine, bearing fruit in us*

We are still on the Easter journey. After the three day roller-coaster of emotions - from Jesus' supper with his disciples, through trial and crucifixion, to the wonder of the women at the empty tomb - we now prepare ourselves to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

During these fifty days, our journey is steadied and enlightened by the words of the First Letter of St John. It has a central message made clear in today's reading: we are asked to believe in Jesus and love one another. We are then assured that we are not alone in this challenge: "We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us."

The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins echoes this in *As Kingfishers Catch Fire*:

“For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his.”

This idea of Christ living within us is explored in today's Gospel where Jesus likens himself to the "true vine." He tells us: "Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty."

Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit we can hold Christ within us, not only in our thoughts, our ideas, our actions, but deep within ourselves, in our souls and in our hearts. We are helped by prayer and by reflecting on the words of scripture, maybe meditating on the images, or by spending time with the phrases that we particularly notice. Or we can sit still and simply open our hearts and listen. Jesus says: "If you remain in me and my words remain in you ..."

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for the whole Church and its leaders.

May we draw our life from you and bear the fruit of the kingdom.

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We pray for genuine love among ourselves;
**prompt us through free, honest and open
discussion, to put aside our differences peacefully.**

We pray in thanksgiving for the gifts, talents and skills
unique to each of us;
**help us to dedicate our gifts to the good of our
human family.**

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, God,
in the resurrection of Jesus
you share with us his risen life.
Transform our darkness, fear and isolation
with your comforting presence
so that we can be your calm, loving,
healing presence to each other.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May your blessing be upon us, O Lord,
as we place all our trust in you.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites for use by individuals, families and small groups as a prayerful celebration of the Word of God to help prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist with our worshipping communities. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. We are also conscious of the many people who, for various reasons including sickness and infirmity, cannot physically attend the Eucharist. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family.



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