

Readings: 5th Sunday of Easter - B -

First Reading Introduction: The Difficult Beginnings of An Apostle

From a fanatic persecutor, Paul becomes a zealous apostle. At the beginning he is distrusted, Barnabas vouches for him and Paul is accepted, but even then he stirs up controversies.

First Reading: Acts 9:26-31

When Saul came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples there, but they were afraid of him because they could not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He recounted to them how Saul had seen the Lord on his way and the words the Lord had spoken to him. He told them also how

Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.

Then Saul began to live with them. He moved about freely in Jerusalem and preached openly in the name of the Lord. He also spoke to the Hellenists and argued with them, but they wanted to kill him. When the believers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

Meanwhile, the Church had peace. It was building up throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria with eyes turned to the Lord and filled with comfort from the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32

R/ I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

or: Alleluia.

I will fulfill my vows before those who fear the LORD.
The lowly shall eat their fill;
they who seek the LORD shall praise him:
"May your hearts live forever!"
R/ I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

or: Alleluia.

All the ends of the earth
shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of the nations
shall bow down before him.
R/ I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

or: Alleluia.

To him alone shall bow down
all who sleep in the earth;
before him shall bend
all who go down into the dust.
R/ I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

or: Alleluia.

And to him my soul shall live;
my descendants shall serve him.
Let the coming generation be told of the LORD
that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born
the justice he has shown.
R/ I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.

or: Alleluia.

Second Reading Introduction: Faith in Jesus and Mutual Love

We are certain that God is present in us and that we are united with him if we believe in Jesus Christ and love one another with a real and active love.

Second Reading: 1 Jn 3:18-24

My dear children, let us love not only with words and with our lips, but in truth and in deed.

Then we shall know that we are of the truth and we may calm our conscience in his presence. Every time it reproaches us, let us say: God is greater than our conscience, and he knows everything.

When our conscience does not condemn us, dear friends, we may have complete confidence in God. Then whatever we ask we shall receive, since we keep his commands and do what pleases him.

His command is that we believe in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another, as he has commanded us.

Whoever keeps his commands remains in God and God in him. It is by the Spirit God has given us that we know he lives in us.

Gospel Introduction: I Am the Vine, You Are the Branches

Only when we are united with Jesus in faith and love, like branches on a vine, can our lives be fruitful and God will give us everything that is good.

Gospel Reading: Jn 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower. If any of my branches doesn't bear fruit, he breaks it off; and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, that it may bear even more fruit.

"You are already made clean by the word I have spoken to you; live in me as I live in you. The branch cannot bear fruit by itself but has to remain part of the vine; so neither can you if you don't remain in me.

"I am the vine and you are the branches. As long as you remain in me and I in you, you bear much fruit; but apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not remain in me is thrown away as they do with branches and they wither. Then they are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned.

"If you remain in me and my words in you, you may ask whatever you want and it will be given to you. My Father is glorified when you bear much fruit: it is then that you become my disciples."
