

April 29, 2018 5th Sunday of Easter

Show your love in deeds for one another!

Acts 9:26-31

Psalms 22:26-28,30-32

1John 3:18-24

John 15:1-8

Saul, formerly Paul, arrives in Jerusalem and the disciples were afraid because of his reputation in persecuting Christians. Barnabas brought him to the Apostles who saw how boldly he spoke out in the name of the Lord. The Church was at peace and being built up and the faithful walked in fear of the Lord and were consoled by the Holy Spirit.

The Psalmist indicates he will fulfill his vows before the faithful. He is confident that the lowly will eat their fill and all shall remember and turn confidently to the Lord before whom they bow. Let it even be proclaimed to a people, not yet born, the justice he has shown.

John emphasizes that our love must be shown in truth and in deeds, and not just in words or speech. When we keep the commandments it shows we believe in the name of the Father's Son, Jesus Christ. Obeying the commandments keeps our consciences clear and our hearts tuned in to God. We will remain in him and he in us, something we confidently know from the Spirit he gave us. We will then receive from him whatever we ask since we are doing what pleases him.

Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. If we remain in Jesus he remains in us, and in this way we will bear much fruit which will glorify the Father. The vine grower is the Father and he will prune the unproductive branches.

The Father is the vine grower,
And the Son is the Vine.

The Holy Spirit guides us into becoming fruitful branches.

Deeds, not words! Everyone knows that integrity means we "walk the talk" and so the test of our faithfulness is in what we do, and not what we say. Words alone will not make anyone holy and just and it is a virtuous life that makes us pleasing to God. Observant people will be able to identify us by the way we act. John stresses the importance of keeping the commandments since this enables us to maintain the spiritual connection we constantly need, and guides our words to match our actions.

Love

Love cannot be constrained and grows beyond all boundaries.

Love does not feel heavy burdens, thinks lightly of labors,
aims beyond its strength,
complains not of impossible tasks.

Love is consequently capable of any task and will succeed
Where those who do not love fail.

Love is always aware and does not slumber.

Even if wearied it will not wear out,
Even if disturbed it will not be alarmed,

And like a flame will rise upward and pass to higher things.

(Adapted from Imitations, Book 3, Chapt.5)

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