

**May 2, 2021 – Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**Dear Parishioners:**

**“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” (John 15:5).**

**According to the Catechism, our relationship with Jesus weakens when we commit venial sins, and when we commit a mortal sin, it gets broken. Even so, the broken relationship can be restored once we repent and receive forgiveness. However, just because we have a relationship with Jesus, that is, simply because we are attached to Jesus, who is the vine, we do not necessarily produce a lot of fruit. Our relationship with Jesus must be strong and intimate so as for us to be fruitful.**

**Among the fruits we bear through our relationship with the Lord, the most important fruit is the salvation of each of us and the souls entrusted to us. This is because even though we bear the fruits of love, faith, hope, and all other virtues, it is useless if we do not reach the completion of salvation in heaven. Thus, our relationship with Jesus should never get disconnected through mortal sins.**

**The second reading today tells us how we can maintain strong bond with Jesus. “We must keep his commandments and do what pleases him” (1John 3:22). His commandment is that “we should believe in the name of Jesus Christ, and love one another” (1John 3:23). Thus, “those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them” (1John 3:24).**

**The key is that this remaining should exist always, not for only a day or two. It's a remaining that we must keep up to the moment we leave this world. Therefore, it is important to persevere and steadfast. To help us to be always attached to the vine, and to establish a strong bond with Him, Jesus left us His Mother as a gift. So, if we ask Our Blessed Mother for her intercession and her maternal protection and guidance, we will always be attached to the Lord who is the vine, and bear fruit. Although we may fall into temptations and be disconnected from Him, we can repent and be attached to Him again thanks to her help.**

**A man condemned to death, in Germany, refused to hear speak of Confession. A Jesuit Father employed all manner of means to convert him: prayers, tears, penances, exhortations – but to no effect. At length he said to him: “Let us say the Hail Mary together.” The prisoner, to get rid of his visitor, consented, and no sooner had he done so than tears began to fall from his eyes, he made his Confession, full of contrition and humility, and would only die with a statue of Our Lady in his hands. (from the book “Catechist” page 155)**

**May is the month of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I hope we will be able to offer our daily Rosary with Our Lady, or at least say three Hail Mary in the morning and in the evening. If we do that, Our Lady will always help us so that we can bear the fruit of salvation while remaining attached to the vine, Jesus, to the end.**

**Fr. Don Bosco Park**