



The Pruning Process

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

The common myth is that we receive a new body every seven years as cells die and are replaced. However, stomach cells are renewed every two days or so because of acids and enzymes. Skin cells are replaced every two to three weeks. Bone cells last about ten years, and our brain cells stay with us for our entire lives. In a sense, then, we might say that our bodies are pruned, part of us remaining long-term to nurture and sustain like the trunk of a tree, and part of us severed so that life may be renewed and continue on.

If so with our bodies, are not our spirits also pruned? There is a core part of who we are that winds its way throughout our lives. Yet that "who" has rough edges in need of being smoothed; barbs need to be dulled; and certain inclinations simply need to be severed. Spouses tend to prune one another, the grace of a loving marriage. Children sometimes keep parents honest. Life events may grind down our independence and self-sufficiency. Illnesses, aging, job loss, the death of loved ones—all forcing us to recognize that we are not in control of life. We are thus pruned, forced to surrender much of what we once thought we could control.

Where is God in all of this? If God is woven into the warp and woof of all life, then all the events and rhythms of life can draw us closer to God, pruning us into goodness and fruitfulness. ●

Reflect

How have you been pruned and has this pruning led to new growth, new life?



[Jesus said,] "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit."

JOHN 15:1-2



Holy Trinity



St. Thomas More



St. Patrick

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Tuesday - Friday 9 am - 1 pm

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Website for the Three Churches
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"Bureau Catholic Churches"

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Emergency Number for all 3 Churches 779-248-2164



Sunday, May 5th - First Communion at HT 8:30 am

Daily Mass Intentions for the Week of April 29, 2024

Monday	4/29			† No Mass
Tuesday	4/30	9:00 am	STM	† For the Souls in Purgatory
Wednesday	5/1	5:30 pm	HT	† Daisy Kopek
Thursday	5/2	9:00 am	HT	† Edmund Herrmann
Friday	5/3	9:00 am	STM	† Dato & Marian Olivero

Mass Intentions for the weekend of May 4 - 5, 2024

Saturday	5/4	4:00 pm	St Thomas More	† For the Parishioners
Sunday	5/5	8:30 am	Holy Trinity	† Don & Virginia McNally
		10:30 am	St Patrick	† Delores Nauman

The Fruitful Relationship Between the Vine and Branches

Jesus tells the disciples that He is the vine and they are the branches. He also tells them that the Father is the "vine grower," but we need to wait a moment before we get to this part of the story. Let's think more fully about this vine and branches relationship. You don't have to know too much about agriculture to know that a branch cannot live apart from the vine or the trunk of the tree. Our life—spiritual life—flows out of that vine. To be in Christ is to draw one's lifeblood, one's identity, one's purpose in life from that relationship. Outside that relationship, there is no life—at least if we're speaking spiritually. Just as the sap runs from the vine to branches, so the Spirit runs from Jesus to us.

The image of the vine invites us to consider how we experience communion with God in Christ. If we are the branches, and Jesus is the vine—should we not expect to produce fruit? When we see vines, we think of grapes, perhaps wine grapes. The expectation of any farmer raising grapes is that the vines and branches will produce fruit. The vines aren't planted to look pretty. They're planted to produce a crop. If a branch doesn't produce then it will be pruned away, so as to make room for new shoots and branches that will produce fruit. According to John, the Father is the vine grower, the one who takes care of the vines, pruning away the dead branches so that the living branches have room to grow and bear fruit. If some branches are cut off and thrown into a fire, what do we make of this? Do we take this as a final judgment or divine correction? Our theology of judgment will likely determine how we answer this. But, what is clear is that God expects us to bear fruit.

So the expectation of the Christian life—a life lived in Christ—is that one will bear fruit. One's life will reflect that mutual indwelling of Christ's life in our life and our life in His. God is in us, and we are in God. One particular form of fruit that one should expect to be present is love. If we continue reading on in John 15, Jesus says that "the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love" (15:9). Yes, the command of Jesus is to "love one another as I have loved you" (15:12). More revealing still is the word found in 1 John 4, that God is love, and that if one does not love, one does not know God. *(Excerpted from "bobcornwall.com")*

May Crowning

May is Mary's month! During May, throughout the Catholic world, special devotions honor the Virgin Mary. "May Crowning" is a traditional Catholic ritual that occurs in the month of May and it recognizes Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. Since medieval times, there has been a correlation between Mary and the month of May. May is considered the season of the beginning of new life. "May Crowning" marks a new spiritual season. Our Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, lifted us right out of the last long, cold days of winter and firmly planted our hearts in the warm and promising soil of spring.



During the Holy Mass on May Crowning day, a wreath of flowers and herbs is placed on the statue of Mary. The act of crowning is rooted in the view of Mary as the Queen of Heaven. The event is of particular significance as it relates to the Champion Shrine history because, when Our Lady appeared to the young Belgian immigrant woman, Adele Brise, in 1859, she identified herself as the "Queen of Heaven."

First Communion

As the First Communion will happen next Sunday, May 5th, we would like to ask for your prayers so that our 1st communicants continue to grow in their faith.

STM Rav/Tort Total

The STM annual rav/tort fundraiser total is \$26,244. Thanks to all who made this happen!

LATEST OFFERING'S

APR 21ST WEEKEND

HT - \$1,168.00

\$15 C. RELIEF/\$20 HOLY LAND/\$15 C. SCHOOL

SP - \$ 466.00

STM - \$ 805.00

Remember in prayer,

family & friends of

Richard Mariani - STM

CONFESSIONS

CONFESSIONS WILL BE

SAT. MAY 4TH

10:30 - 11:15 AM AT

ST. PATRICK

IN THE CHAPEL

Dear Padre,

Several months ago my son died in a tragic car accident. Life, work, family, and even religion seem so meaningless now. How can I find my way back?



You have suffered a great loss. When you are able, you can choose to live in a way that will respect both your son's memory and your own ongoing life. Here are a few gentle steps that might help.

- Expect to feel numb at first. This is nature's way of helping you deal with your loss. Keep following the normal patterns of your life and, eventually, meaning will return.
- Allow your friends to help. "Sorrows shared are sorrows lessened."
- If you are sad, let the tears come! Even Jesus cried at the death of his friend Lazarus (John 11:32-35).
- If you are angry, look for a healthy release. Focus the energy of your anger into productive work, even if it's just doing dishes or yard work.
- Use your experience to help others. While helping others, the Lord often reveals to us the meaning of our own losses.
- Don't be afraid to seek professional help. A therapist has the expertise to help you talk about your loss and cope with your grief.
- Pray for yourself, for your son, for all whose lives he touched, for all those who are grieving.
- After you have done everything you can, leave your loss in God's hands. The Lord will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. ●

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
April 29	April 30	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5
St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday	St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church	Sts. Philip and James, Apostles	Easter Weekday	Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 14:5-18 Jn 14:21-26	Acts 14:19-28 Jn 14:27-31a	Acts 15:1-6 Jn 15:1-8	Acts 15:7-21 Jn 15:9-11	1 Cor 15:1-8 Jn 14:6-14	Acts 16:1-10 Jn 15:18-21	Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 1 Jn 4:7-10 Jn 15:9-17



A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Jesus needs us, like the vine with the branches. Perhaps to say this may seem bold to us, and so let us ask ourselves: in what sense does Jesus need us? He needs our witness. The fruit that as branches we must bear, is the witness of our lives as Christians.

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 2, 2021