

# St. William Parish Community



Walled Lake, Michigan 48390

May 2, 2021

www.stwilliam.com



Last week in my column, I reflected on the pain, difficulties, and disruptions that COVID has caused, BUT that God can bring great good out of evil, as long as we are willing to put our lives at the disposal of his plan. This has been true since the beginning of the Church: tremendous good comes even out of tough situations when disciples are willing to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

As an example of how that still happens today—right here in our Parish—I wrote about our camera ministry that has improved the worship experience for the people in our overflow seating. (That large space has allowed many more people to safely return to Eucharist.) We were also *pushed* into creating a livestream ministry so that our Sunday Mass and other worship and educational events could get to our homebound, as well as being an outreach to others. I am convinced the Holy Spirit has led us in this, providing people and resources—seemingly out of nowhere—to make it happen. As we step out in faith, purchasing and installing the equipment to replace our jury-rigged setup, that used borrowed equipment, into a more reliable and permanent installation, I see the Holy Spirit once again providing for those who trust in Him. (Update: The majority of the installation should be complete by the time you read this. I wrote last week that our Livestream Fund didn't have enough to cover the contract—some \$12,000 short—but I *knew* the expenses would be covered. They were! Praise the Lord!)

Another area where we're stepping out in faith—forced by COVID, but likely in the direction the Holy Spirit wanted us to take anyway—is with our Faith Formation programs, especially those for our after-school children and their parents.

There is always a tendency to “do things as we've always done them”, whether or not it still works well.

*(Continued on page 3)*



## 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

“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 everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.” - Jn. 15:1-2

Excerpt from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 ECD

SLP

### *Inside this week . . .*

National Day of Prayer

Rosary Rally

Camp Ozanam

*. . .and more!*

Parish Mission: *“To live the Good News so joyfully, that we can't help but proclaim it!”*

## MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 4:30 pm,  
Sunday \*10:00 am (\*also Live-streamed)  
and Sunday 12:30 pm  
Tues., Wed. & Thur., 8:00 am

### Office Hours

Monday through Thursday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Many issues can be taken care of with a phone call, 248-624-1421.

### Registration

For many reasons it is important to be formally registered as a parishioner. Contact the rectory for friendly help. Ext. 341

### Baptism

To begin the preparation process for Baptism please call Deacon Bob Dreyer at 624-1421, ext. 345. Baptisms are normally scheduled the first and third Sundays of the month.

### Marriage

To celebrate a valid marriage Catholics must have the help of a priest or deacon. Call at least six months in advance.

### Funeral

Please contact the parish office to make arrangements.

### Ministry To The Sick

We are happy to visit the sick and provide anointing. Please contact the Parish Office at 624-1421.

### RECTORY

Email: [Rectory1@stwilliam.com](mailto:Rectory1@stwilliam.com)  
531 Common Street (248) 624-1421

<b>Pastor</b>	Rev. Michael G. Savickas	Ext. 346
<b>Deacons</b>	Rev. Mr. Bob Dreyer Rev. Mr. John Liddle	Ext. 345
<b>Baptisms</b>	Dcn. Bob Dreyer	Ext. 345
<b>Business Office</b>		Ext. 341
<b>Business Manager</b>	Mrs. Deborah Diviny	Ext. 349
<b>Administrative Asst.</b>	Mrs. Lisa Geoffrey	Ext. 342
<b>Pastoral Assistant</b>	Mrs. Karen Sommers 248-624-8870	Ext. 344
<b>Maintenance:</b> Supervisor	(248) 669-5522 Mr. Dave Colby	Ext. 312

### EDUCATION CENTER

135 O'Flaherty Street

<b>Office of Faith Formation</b>	(248) 624-1371
Dir. of Rel. Ed.	Dcn. Michael McCrandall Ext. 307
Dir. Of Initiation	Mrs. Nancy Thomas Ext. 306
Youth Ministry	Mrs. Karen Trojniak Ext. 308
Music Ministry Dir.	Mr. Bill Richart Ext. 310
Administrative Asst.	Mrs. Lisa Geoffrey Ext. 342
<b>School Office</b>	(248) 669-4440
Principal	Mrs. Betsy Gabrish Ext. 303
Secretary	Ext. 302

### CYO Sports

Athletic Director

[ad@saintwilliam.net](mailto:ad@saintwilliam.net)

## Eucharistic Adoration

Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>

12 to 3 PM



Since attendance at Masses have declined due to concerns over COVID, contributions have greatly declined. If you are in a position to help, automatic giving can be easily arranged online. Go to [Faithdirect.net](http://Faithdirect.net), or follow the link from our website, [www.stwilliam.com](http://www.stwilliam.com).



### Offertory Report

(The fiscal year begins July 1)

	Collected	Budgeted*	Over/(Under)
As of Mar., 2021	<b>*\$617,508</b>	\$749,997	<b>(\$132,489)</b>

\*This does NOT represent *needed* income, but only the amount we expected would actually come in.

Note: For clarity and accuracy, this report now shows reconciled month-end balances.

## The "One-Hour Challenge!"

To have a *happy, peaceful life*, it is important that we have our lives in order, with our grateful response to God for his gifts being our top priority. That is how a disciple responds in the areas of *prayer, family, finance, and service*.

If you need help to put balance in your life, take the "one-hour challenge": Each week, spend at least...

- One hour in prayer and worship.
- One hour, special, focused on your family or other important relationship.
- One hour's wage (if you have a job) for the Lord. No job? Then give what seems right for you.
- One hour in service. (Helping another, or working for some cause.)

It's important to be *specific* in what steps to take in order to ensure that each "hour" actually happens!

May God bless you!

(Continued from page 1)

For many years the traditional approach to the faith formation of children who are not attending a Catholic school was to provide “catechism” lessons either after school or on Sundays. These were taught by parishioners who volunteered to be catechists and were willing to take catechist training courses. Parents, would dutifully drop the kids off for the lessons. We always affirmed that the parents, nonetheless, are to be the main catechists of their own children. Still, in years past, this arrangement of providing formal classes seemed to be working, especially when most families would be regularly attending Mass with their children. But now, given the tremendous amount of secularization that has plagued our society, which affects Catholics as well, the faith formation of our children has suffered, and simply providing “lessons” is just not enough. According to the Pew Research Center, 1 in 5 children baptized do not receive 1<sup>st</sup> Communion; 2 in 5 children baptized are not Confirmed; and 85% of children Confirmed stop practicing their faith by age 21. What we did in past is not good enough.

Our Archdiocese has taken a bold but, I think, appropriate move by completely re-thinking how religion is taught, both in our Catholic Schools and in our after-school religious education programs, and providing curriculum guidelines that all parish programs must meet. An essential element now, is to foster **discipleship**, not simply provide information. *Encounter* [the Lord], *grow*, and then learn to *share* Christ with others is part and parcel of the new curriculum.

But wait, there’s more.

Because of COVID, we were not able to do what we’ve always done, which is to provide in-person after-school classes. At this parish, in response to the restrictions, our Director of Religious Education, Deacon Mike, started meeting with **parents** of our K thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, either in-person or via Zoom. The idea was that the parents would have their own faith and understanding enriched, and be able to take a more direct role in passing on the Faith to their children. I’ve heard from a number of these parents, telling me that they were excited about what they themselves were learning. There is still some hesitancy on their part about being the sole catechists, however. As we look to next school year, we are going to abandon the “traditional” program in favor of one that involves the parents more. There will still be some classes for the kids, so we will still need volunteer catechists. (If you believe the Holy Spirit may be calling you to this very important role, please give Deacon Mike a call. 248-624-1371 ext. 307. We need you!) I am working out the curriculum, schedule, and other details of the new program with the help of my Pastoral Advisory Team.



## Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021

- 8:00 am  
Mass with special intention for our nation
- 9:00 am - 11 am  
Adoration of The Blessed Sacrament
- 11:00 am - 12:30 pm  
Recitation of full Rosary outside by the grotto, weather permitting
- 12:30 am - 2:00 pm  
Lunch break  
The church will be open for private prayer
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
Eucharistic Procession
- 3:00pm - 5:00 pm  
Confession

Another area that my Pastoral Advisory Team and I are prayerfully discerning is the structure of our parish as it pertains to the Pastoral Council and the Commissions. Again, COVID has restricted when and how these groups could meet, and, as a result, some have hardly been active at all. This hiatus has created an opportunity to step back from the busy-ness of Parish life and wonder if the Holy Spirit wants us to use this opportunity to make the groups more effective. Perhaps we need to pay more attention to individual *charisms* (talents that the Spirit has given to various persons for the build-up of the community). People get more enthused and productive when their charisms are recognized and used! This may result in a smaller number of people within each Commission who would meet more often to discern the needs and organize the programs (leadership charisms), and a larger number of people who are better attuned to doing the work of carrying out the programs (service charisms). This could be exciting!

You know, COVID could turn out to be a good thing.

In Jesus,  
Fr. Michael

## Rosary Altar Society

### Bake Sale This Weekend

May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> after all Masses!

### Membership Meeting

Our membership meeting will be this Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM in lower Zepf Hall.

### Mother's Day Card Sale

This weekend, May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>



## Pray the Rosary

Our Legion of Mary members invite you to join them Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm to pray the Rosary.

All are welcome to stay after and attend their brief meeting and learn more about the Legion

## A Family Perspective

by Bud Ozar

Like the vine grower in today's gospel, parents must "prune and cleanse" the branches in their family if their children are going to be rooted. Discipline, limits and setting goals are a necessary part of parenting so our children will grow and "bear fruit."



## St. Vincent de Paul Society



## Camp Ozanam

Our parish St. Vincent de Paul Conference is blessed to share an opportunity with families struggling (financially or suffering some other hardship such as divorce, separation, death of a loved one, etc.) with children between the age of 8 and 14. If this applies, we'd like to offer your child(ren) the opportunity to attend Camp Ozanam this summer for free. The camp provides children the chance to experience a free week of summer residential camping. Children will enjoy the great outdoors, making new friends and life-long memories this summer at Camp Ozanam!

Please contact Melani by leaving a message for her at the parish office, 248-624-1421.

## Bundle Days are coming!

With the arrival of spring in Michigan, most of us are looking forward to getting back to normal, and putting this pandemic in our rear-view mirror. To that end, your St Vincent de Paul conference is happy to sponsor Bundle Day weekend collection drive on May 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>.

We will be accepting clean, useable clothing, linens, shoes and accessories, as well as kitchen items and other household goods. Please do not bring TV's or electronics but small appliances are accepted. Your goods may be dropped off before and after all Masses or really anytime all weekend, as our members monitor the truck regularly, in order to keep things neat and organized. Thank-you for your patience and generosity!



## St. Vincent de Paul Society — Third Sunday of Easter

In the Gospel today, Jesus says “Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.” Indeed, by helping the poor we can “bear much fruit” and we find that with Jesus we can do everything.

Your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will show that you are indeed the disciple of Jesus as it will bring your love to those who **live in fear and doubt, loneliness and dread.**

### USCCB *Word of Life*

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

USCCB Respect Life flyer quoting Pope Francis’ “Day for Life Greeting”  
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### Right to Life — Lifespan Dinner Rescheduled

Due to restrictions on the number of guests allowed at our Celebrate Life dinner, it has been rescheduled. The new date is October 12. The venue remains the same, the San Marino Club in Troy and the speakers, Diamond and Silk, have agreed to the new date. We currently have a wait list for reservations. There is no reservation cost for this fund-raising dinner. Please call the LIFESPAN office for more information. 248-816-1546.

### Intercessory Prayers

Intercessory prayer boxes have been placed in the tower entrances. Our Intercessory Prayer Teams will lift your intentions up in prayer for two weeks. You may also email your prayer requests by clicking the link on our website, [www.stwilliam.com](http://www.stwilliam.com). All prayer requests are kept confidential.

## Rosary Rally

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 to 3:00 pm

Meet in the main parking lot at 12:00 noon.

We will gather along Pontiac Trail to pray for God’s protection of our country and an end to abortion.

### Everyday Stewardship — Branching Out Isn’t Always What It’s Cracked Up to Be

“That’s a really beautiful tree branch. Man, would you look at the bark on that thing? The others are real duds, but that low-hanging branch has really got it all together.”

I’ve never heard anyone say this. Maybe I just need to hang out with more arborists, but I can’t recall ever hearing someone admire the particular beauty of a single branch. When someone comments on a tree, it’s usually the whole tree — perhaps a visual element of it, like the color of the leaves or its height. But people don’t usually zero in on one branch.

Maybe that’s because usually, if one branch is looking a little weak, chances are every other branch is, too.

The Bible tells us that when we bear fruit as good everyday stewards, it is for the Father’s glory. We are the branch on His magnificent tree. What we have is from Him, and what we do likewise points back to Him. We also tend to reflect how well the other branches around us are incorporating the nutrients coming their way. That’s all fine and good in theory. In practice, it can be an arduous exercise in humility.

When I do something virtuous or charitable or kind, there is a part of me that wants to stand out for it. I think that’s true for all of us. We’ve given of ourselves in some way or overcome some human temptation to accomplish a little bit of good in this world, and even though we know God sees us, we’d really love for everyone else to see it, too.

It’s a struggle, for sure. But we need to remember that our fruit belongs to the whole tree.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS. ©LPi

## WHY DO WE DO THAT? -

**Question:** Is gossip a mortal sin?

**Answer:**

To really ask this question, we must consider the Eighth Commandment: "You shall not bear false witness."

In its reflections on this commandment, The Catechism of the Catholic Church invites us to not only think about what bearing "false witness" means, but to also consider how we understand the truth and how we communicate more broadly. This is why so much of this section of the Catechism has to do with the gift of language. With this in mind, we will notice that the word "gossip" isn't used by the Catechism. Instead, we find the words "detraction" and "calumny," which are actually two forms that gossip can take, and both can be quite serious.

First, detraction is the of revealing "another's faults and failings to persons who did not know them," without

morally valid reasons. Calumny, by extension, is saying something about another person that is untrue, and it is sinful because it "harms the reputation of others and gives occasion for false judgements" (see no. 2477).

In all of our communication, we have to always recognize that we have a moral obligation to the truth and to always work to protect the reputation and honor of our neighbors (see no. 2479).

Gossip can, in fact, prove to be a very serious sin. After all, the Catechism reminds us: "No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it" (no. 2489). When we have gossiped, especially if we are aware we have damaged another person's good name or reputation, we want to make every effort to undo the damage we have done, including seeking the grace and forgiveness offered in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

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## 2021 Right-To-Life Novi Golf Outing

Saturday, June 19, 2021, 8:00 am  
Cattails Golf Club  
57737 9 Mile Rd  
South Lyon, Michigan

**Special guest: Frank Tanana, former Detroit Tiger and member of the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame**

### INCLUDES:

- 18 Holes of Golf with Cart
- Continental breakfast before golf begins at 7 AM
- Lunch after golf
- Driving Range

### Proceeds to Benefit

Another Way Pregnancy Center; Lennon Pregnancy Center; Support of Ultrasound Machines; Various Adoption Services; March For Life, Washington D.C.; Educational & Community Outreach; Support High School Youth Groups

Single golfer: \$135.00

Foursome \$500.00

Please make checks payable to: Right To Life Novi

Register on-line at [rtlnovi.com/golf-outing](http://rtlnovi.com/golf-outing)

OR mail this registration form and check to:

Right to Life Novi

P.O. Box 1381, Novi, MI, 48376

For more info (734) 262-0353 – Michael Stephens

(248) 444-4773 – John Wright

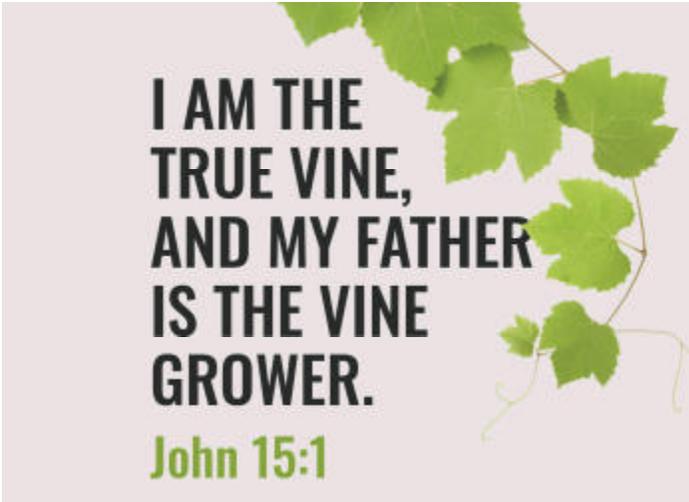
[rtlnovi@gmail.com](mailto:rtlnovi@gmail.com)

## Hospitality Committee Update - May!

Thank you to the friendly Ushers and Greeters who welcome us to our weekend Masses. The Parishioners in those roles help extend the Lord's WELCOME and we are Blessed.

As always, we encourage you to join us in the endeavor of Radical Hospitality! Have you considered being a Greeter or Usher?

Divine Mercy Sunday and Good Shepard Sunday are behind us and Pentecost is on the horizon – the Last Holy Day of Easter! God Bless the children who will be receiving their First Holy Communion and Confirmation in May, both significant milestones in our Catholic Faith!



**I AM THE  
TRUE VINE,  
AND MY FATHER  
IS THE VINE  
GROWER.**

**John 15:1**



### OUR MISSION

“We exist to provide a school environment in which Christ is encountered and Discipleship is fostered through the teaching and practice of Catholic Tradition, values and doctrine, while challenging each student to academic excellence.”

## Dine & Donate

THURSDAY, MAY 6  
11A.M. — 9 P.M.

### In-restaurant Orders

Present the flier below or show a copy of it on your phone FUND A

### Online Orders

Use online code 1015A

# 20%

of proceeds from your order will be donated to St. William Catholic School PSA



FAST-FIRE'D

26401 Novi Rd  
Novi, MI 48375

(248) 773-8955  
www.blazepizza.com

Raise funds for



Enjoy yourself and support our cause at a special fundraising event for:

St. Williams School PSA

#### BLAZE PIZZA WILL DONATE 20% OF PROCEEDS FROM YOUR ORDER BACK TO THIS ORGANIZATION!

Date: Thursday, May 6 and Friday, June 4, 2021

Time: 11:00 am – 9:00 pm

Location: 26401 Novi Road, Novi

Order Method:

In Restaurant: Present this flyer or show a copy of it on your phone before paying. FUND A

Online & App Orders: Orders must be placed online at blazepizza.com or through the Blaze Pizza app. Enter **1015A** into the "Coupon Code" field at checkout to have your transaction count toward the fundraiser. If entered correctly, you'll see a \$.01 discount applied to your check which confirms that 20% of your transaction will be counted into the total donation. VALID FOR PICKUP, CARRYOUT AND CURBSIDE & DELIVERY WHERE AVAILABLE.

VALID FOR DINE-IN, PICK-UP AND DELIVERY AND CURBSIDE WHERE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE BLAZE PIZZA APP & WEBSITE. For online orders, only transactions that have the promo code applied during the time and date specified above will be counted toward the donation total. Donation amount excludes proceeds from tax and giftcard purchases. Excludes 3rd party delivery and phone orders. FLYER DISTRIBUTION IN-RESTAURANT PROHIBITED



### SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL

Kroger Community Rewards  
Go to [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com)  
Choose St. William School  
Our School ID is NS244

Box Tops for Education  
Clip Board  
NEW! Earn Box Tops via  
Phone App  
[www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com)

Amazon Smile  
Start each shopping session at  
<http://smile.amazon.com>  
Select St. William School as charity  
We will receive 0.5% of all  
eligible purchases

## Mass Intentions:

**Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00 am**

**Edward McElmeel (D)** Maureen Emerick; **Members of St. William Parish (L&D)**

**Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00 am**

**Sara Tripadi (D)** Koss family

**Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00 am**

**Lucio Capicchioni (D)** family; **Bill Quillin (D)**; **For the Lord's blessings on our nation (SI)**

**Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>**

**4:30 pm**

**Chester & Antoinette Tabaczka (D)** family; **Audrey Falzon (D)** friend; **Mary Marena (D)** family; **Dave Kozora (D)** wife; **Hilda Koss (D)** family; **Donna & Joe Stilwell (SI, 5<sup>th</sup> Anniv.)**

**Sunday, May 9<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00 am**

**Members of St. William Parish (L&D)**

**12:30 pm**

**Ray & Marie Hibbeln (D)**; **Nidhal Bodiya (D)** Gustafson family; **Arline Pyle (D)** family; **Beverly Troskey (D)** family; **Sheila Conklin (D)** and **Eula Courmay (D)** Chick & Karen Conklin; **Lee Elwart (D)** family

## Readings for the week

**Sunday:** Acts 9:26-31/Ps 22:26-27, 28, 30, 31-32 [26a]/1 Jn 3:18-24/Jn 15:1-8

**Monday:** 1 Cor 15:1-8/Ps 19:2-3, 4-5 [5]/Jn 14:6-14

**Tuesday:** Acts 14:19-28/Ps 145:10-11, 12-13ab, 21 [cf. 12]/Jn 14:27-31a

**Wednesday:** Acts 15:1-6/Ps 122:1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5 [cf. 1]/Jn 15:1-8

**Thursday:** Acts 15:7-21/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 10 [3]/Jn 15:9-11

**Friday:** Acts 15:22-31/Ps 57:8-9, 10 and 12 [10a]/Jn 15:12-17

**Saturday:** Acts 16:1-10/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 5/Jn 15:18-21

**Next Sunday:** Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4 [cf. 2b]/1 Jn 4:7-10/Jn 15:9-17

## Pray for the Sick of Our Parish

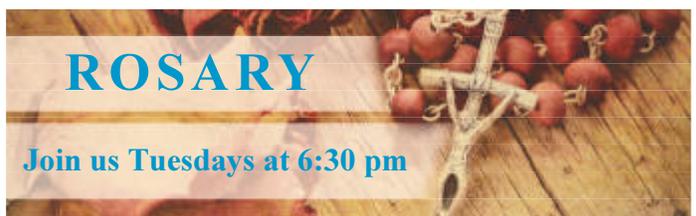
All-powerful and ever-lasting God, your Son accepted our sufferings to teach us the virtue of patience in human illness. Hear the prayers we offer for our sick brothers and sisters. May all who suffer pain, illness, or disease realize that they have been chosen to be saints and know that they are joined to Christ in his suffering for the salvation of the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ♦ Agnes Bushaw       | ♦ Kimi Stephens       |
| ♦ Andrew Hailo       | ♦ Larry Bischoff      |
| ♦ Barbara Carducci   | ♦ Nick Malzahn        |
| ♦ Becky Malzahn      | ♦ Norma Kirk          |
| ♦ Bobbi Farmer       | ♦ Pam Balogh          |
| ♦ Bonny Mesaros      | ♦ Pat Grams           |
| ♦ Carla Podgurski    | ♦ Peggy Counts        |
| ♦ Cathy Vanderhovel  | ♦ Ryan Mele           |
| ♦ Chris Rivers       | ♦ Sharon Martin       |
| ♦ Christine McCarthy | ♦ Sharon Ryan         |
| ♦ Dan Lessard        | ♦ Stephanie Kozlowski |
| ♦ Dennis Ryan        | ♦ Trevor Monfette     |
| ♦ Dianne Gravett     | ♦ Val Colussi         |
| ♦ Dolores Hollis     |                       |
| ♦ Donna Thomas       |                       |
| ♦ Ellie Azzato       | <b>Residents of:</b>  |
| ♦ Fred Counts        | ♦ Bloomfield Villa    |
| ♦ Henry Reinhardt    | ♦ Brookdale           |
| ♦ Jackie Wolverton   | ♦ First & Main        |
| ♦ James Miller       | ♦ Henry Ford          |
| ♦ Janie Wolverton    | ♦ Maple Manor         |
| ♦ Jerry Robinson     | ♦ Novi Lakes          |
| ♦ John Benedict      | ♦ Serenity            |
| ♦ John Shubsda       | ♦ Sunrise Senior Ctr. |
| ♦ Jonathan Medonis   | ♦ Waltonwood          |



*Happy are those who have died in the Lord;  
let them rest from their labors for their good  
deeds go with them—Rev. 14:13*

Jean Comeau  
Ellen Dawson  
Betty Wallen  
Stuart Feravich

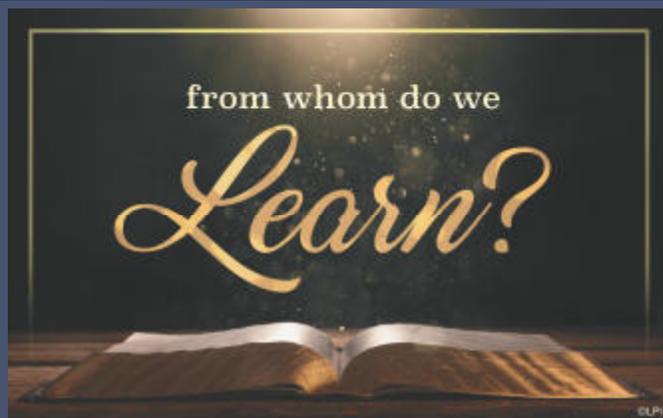


## Gospel Meditation

### Fifth Sunday of Easter

"Spiraling out of control," is a phrase that can easily describe the current display of human existence. In addition to the violence, unrest, uneasiness and turmoil that are common elements of our daily news, other essential pieces are misplaced or missing. Many lack an objective center around which to order and structure their lives or a clear set of definable goals or mores to act as guideposts and life directives. It appears that "feelings" have become a "new god" and traditional structures and ideals set aside. It is almost as if history only shows that we got this whole thing wrong and many are determined to finally set things right. The real truth, however, is that while wrongs and errors are certainly a part of our often-checked past, it is hardly the case that all was wrong. It is not our task to rewrite the history of our lives, but to learn from mistakes that were made, and preserve the perennial wisdom at the root of our successes. Learning is an essential part of being human.

The question becomes, however, from whom do we learn? Some have such a hard time placing God in that position, but that is precisely where God needs to be. God is the Master Teacher from whom all of humanity learns and gets its cues. It is in and through this relationship with the Gardener of Life that we are fashioned and pruned into the people we are intended to be and can be. It is only in God that we are able to find our best selves. Sadly, many think that religion too, as well as history in general, has also gotten all this wrong. Yet, our resurrection



faith tells us differently. We are reminded, today especially, that we are meant to remain in Christ as Christ remains in us. We are also reminded that Jesus, the Incarnate God, is the vine upon which we grow, the branches that flow from the source of God's life.

Giving up our will to God's can be a painful endeavor. It is not easy to set our own desires and wants aside and allow God to step in and direct and guide our growth. But this is the only way to prevent deadly weeds from overtaking us and bringing us to a place of self-destruction. God's commandments are the very guideposts and benchmarks we need, yet many seek to remove them from all public view because they appear to limit self-expression and suppress what is considered by many to be "human freedom." They are the only way we can find freedom, however. And, until we learn this fundamental lesson, we will continue to spiral out of control, never really knowing who we are, what our potential can be or how life really can be lived. We will not know peace.

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## Live the Liturgy

Anyone familiar with gardening knows that proper and timely pruning is essential. The health of the plant depends upon it. An unpruned tree can quickly produce suckers that zap many of the essential nutrients from its body. Pruning requires patience and vision. Studies reveal that plants often respond defensively to being pruned, displaying reactions that are similar to hurt or discomfort. Pruning is not easy but necessary. A hard lesson for us to learn is that we also need to be pruned. We become far healthier when we allow God to stretch, refine, and form us into the best version of ourselves. The fruit that then comes from our vines will be more abundant, nutritious, and robust. Left to our own devices we can easily find ourselves running amuck and spiraling out of control. Without a proper vision and trust in the Master Pruner, we will never find the contentment we desperately desire. Nor will the work of the Gospel stand a chance of succeeding.

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### Sharing the Gospel

When you go into a strange place, you like to stay close to your parents. You trust them to keep you safe. Jesus wants you to stay close to him every day. Jesus is your vine. You are one of his branches. Learn his teachings and obey them. When you stay close to Jesus and follow his commandments, you can pray for whatever you want, and God the Father will answer your prayers.

### Prayer

Jesus, help me stay close to you and follow your commandments.

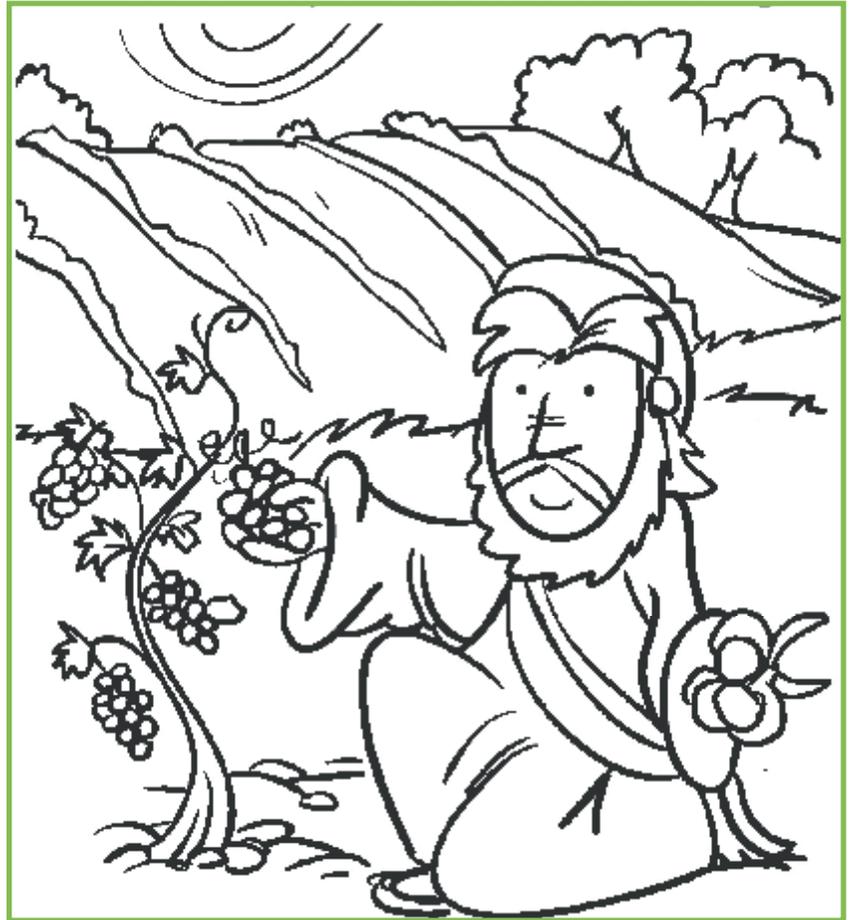
### Something to Draw

Draw Jesus as a vine with you, your family and friends for its branches.

### Mission for the Week

I will love God more than anything and love my neighbors as myself.

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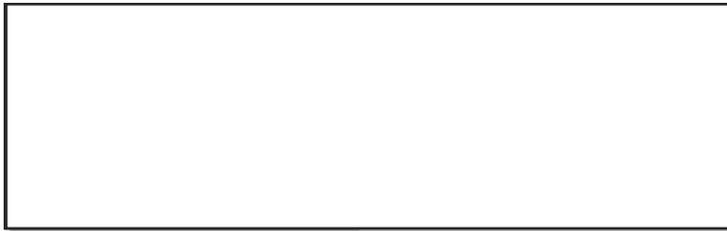
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