

ARE YOU DEVELOPING GODLY CHARACTER?

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 2 MAY 2021



www.stjosephsbrackenridge.com | Canva

TODAY'S HOMILY

Today's homily is by Clint McGoldrick.

Clint is a program leader for ministry and service at St Patrick's College Shorncliffe and was instituted into the ministry of lector at St Joseph and St Anthony Parish, Bracken Ridge on the 19th of July 2020. Clint is an Aboriginal descendant of the Worimi people, of Forster Tuncurry in NSW and grew up in Brisbane.

Clint, his wife Karley and their two sons are part of our parish family.

We hold Clint and his family in prayer, as he continues his journey to being ordained a permanent deacon.

Fr Gerry Hefferan

ARE YOU DEVELOPING GODLY CHARACTER?

Are you developing Godly character?

Are you promoting the Gospel, and are you loving each other?

By doing these things God is glorified.

Our Gospel Acclamation may be key to understanding today's gospel and its takeaway message for us: ***"Live in me and let me live in you," says the Lord. My Branches bear much fruit.***

Two words assist us to understand our Gospel today: *pruning* and *abide*. The Greek NT translation of pruning is to *'purify'* – this may be a confrontational word for some of us.

To abide is ***"to Remain with, wait for, not Departing From."*** ***Purify and remain with me.***

The growing of a grapevine is a balanced art form. If the branches have too few growing points, it grows too fast and produces fewer flowers and smaller grapes. However, if it has too many growing points, it grows too fast and wide, and its energy is wasted on growth and the clusters do not produce large or juicy grapes. If branches are not bearing fruit, or obstructing light to other branches, our gospel says they will be burned in the heap.

Jesus is explaining to His disciples, and to us, what great benefits accompany abiding in Christ. He uses the example of a grape vine when He explains what it means to abide. The grapes receive

nourishment through water and nutrients from the ground, which then flows up the vine and out into those branches, which then, in time, bear fruit.

*What nutrients do we get from being connected to Jesus?
Where does our nourishment come from?*

Jesus says in our Gospel today that we ***“Already clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”*** And that if we abide in Him, ***“my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”*** That connection is God’s Word being made available to us through the Holy Spirit. He is feeding us godly nutrients through the proclaiming of the Word in our prayer lives, our sacramental life and our sacramental calendar. He is causing us to make sense of it and to remember it.

We, as Christians, have experienced our own period of dormancy within our liturgical calendar: one might say that our inwards inspection during lent was a period of pruning, removing the branches in our life that do not bear fruit.

We must connect to the Holy Spirit and His Word.

The period of Easter is a celebration of His resurrection, ascension to the Father and looking towards Pentecost, where we work with His spirit amongst His church.

Let us remind ourselves of the blessings we receive during the Easter season: the *four* simple yet deeply symbolic icons we use in our Sacramental calendar have great theological symbolism and bring great joy:

1. the water of baptisms;
2. the oil in baptisms
3. and the Confirmation of candidates we have presented this week;
4. the bread and wine,
Alleluia!

As we actively proclaim His love to His church, we are abiding in him.

“As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.”

Those of us not drawing our life from the vine and not bearing fruit – may experience removal. Those of us drawing our life from the vine and bearing fruit – may experience pruning. As we are pruned may we hold onto the hope that this will result in more fruit in the next season of our life.

“Make your home in me as I make mine in you.” Purify and remain with me.

Clint McGoldrick

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/050221.cfm>