

Peace I leave with you;  
 my peace I give to you.  
 Not as the world gives do I give it to you.  
 Do not let your hearts be troubled or  
 afraid.  
 - John 14

## Fifth Week of Easter: May 6 - 12, 2012

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### Fifth Week of Easter

“I am the vine. You are the branches.” On the **Fifth Sunday of Easter** we have the wonderful reading from **John's gospel** about Jesus as the vine. We are the branches that are pruned to bear more fruit. The powerful invitation is to remain connected with Jesus, that we might make our home in him, and bear much fruit.

In the continuing weekday readings from the **Acts of the Apostles**, we see Paul and Barnabas preaching to the Gentiles. They encounter some who want to make them gods; others who want to stone them. A major discussion is held about whether a Gentile had to become a Jew before becoming a Christian. Peter declared that God granted Gentiles “the Holy Spirit just as he did us” and urged them not to burden Gentiles with the difficult Jewish laws. The group turned to the Holy Spirit and prayed for guidance and decided that Gentiles did not have to adhere to Jewish laws. Paul followed the Spirit to expand his travels, ending with his decision to go to Macedonia.

**John's Gospel** continues the “Last Discourse” of Jesus, taking chapters 14 and 15 of the Fourth Gospel during the weekdays. These gospels offer a layered and poetic look at the kind of inseparable love we share with God. “Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.” He promises the Holy Spirit who “will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.” He offers us peace and encourages us “not let your hearts be

### Daily Prayer This Week

We can hold the words of Jesus in our hearts all week. As we do, we will discover their attractiveness and invitation. We will also encounter resistance in ourselves and in others.

It takes practice to stay focused in the background of our daily life. We all have years of habit to overcome. However, we can practice letting this consoling message of Jesus find a place in our conscious awareness at various points in our day, whether it is in the shower, while getting dressed, or simply whenever we are on our way from one place to another. Sometimes it will take a conscious effort to let these thoughts replace the thoughts that are there already. In the background of our day is where our worries reside. It's where we carry anxiety and stress. Sometimes it is where we carry on imaginary conversations with others or “replay” past conversations. Often a song or piece of music just replays over and over.

This is a great week to get in touch with our deepening desires and to let my conversations with Jesus grow in friendship. The easiest way to do this is to simply say simple ordinary things -- the very way I would say them to a close friend. Some examples might offer words that will inspire our own conversation with the Lord who loves us.

*“Jesus, every time I hear you say I don't have to let my heart be troubled, I pause. I sense you are pointing to the 'troubles' I'm working through today. You're asking me to let go of them, aren't you? I'd like to, Jesus, but some of this is big stuff. It scares me. I know some of what I need to do, but I put it off. I know what I'm avoiding. It helps to focus on your love for me this week. I*

troubled or afraid.” “As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.” He tells his followers, “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain.” Saturday, Jesus reminds us that if the world didn't like his announcing and living of this good news, then it won't like our announcing and living it either.

On the **Sixth Sunday of Easter**, we hear those powerful words that will be repeated on Monday: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain.”

*guess what I really need to ask you for today is that you let me trust you more completely. It is really nice these days to feel that you are so close to me, and that I'm not alone today.”*

*“I haven't been very connected to you, Jesus. This conversation is difficult because it reminds me the embarrassing stuff I keep doing - even though right now, I'm ashamed to talk about it in your presence. Please forgive me. Some of this I want to bring to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, so that I can be re-connected with you again. I need a 'turning point,' Jesus. Thank you for being there.”*

*“Good night, Jesus. Thank you for today. Let me put everything aside tonight. I know you will be with me all day tomorrow.”*

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