

FIFTH WEDNESDAY OF EASTERTIDE
FEAST OUR LADY OF FATIMA

13TH MAY 2020



This feast commemorates the visions of Our Lady seen near Fátima in Portugal in 1917 by three shepherd children, Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto. The visions occurred on the 13th day of each month from May to October, and by October huge crowds were gathering at the site of the visions and reporting visions and miraculous occurrences themselves. Pope John Paul II was devoted to Our Lady of Fátima and attributed his survival of an assassin's bullet on 13 May 1981 to her intervention. Jacinta and Francisco Marto, who died in the great Spanish Flu pandemic of 1919-20, were beatified on 13 May 2000.

A Reading From the Acts of the Apostles 15: 1 – 6

Some men came down from Judaea and taught the brothers, 'Unless you have yourselves circumcised in the tradition of Moses you cannot be saved.' This led to disagreement, and after Paul and Barnabas had had a long argument with these men it was arranged that Paul and Barnabas and others of the church should go up to Jerusalem and discuss the problem with the apostles and elders.

All the members of the church saw them off, and as they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria they told how the pagans had been converted, and this news was received with the greatest satisfaction by the brothers. When they arrived in Jerusalem they were welcomed by the church and by the apostles and elders, and gave an account of all that God had done with them. But certain members of the Pharisees' party who had become believers objected, insisting that the pagans should be circumcised and instructed to keep the Law of Moses. The apostles and elders met to look into the matter.

THE WORD OF THE LORD

PSALM 121 (122)

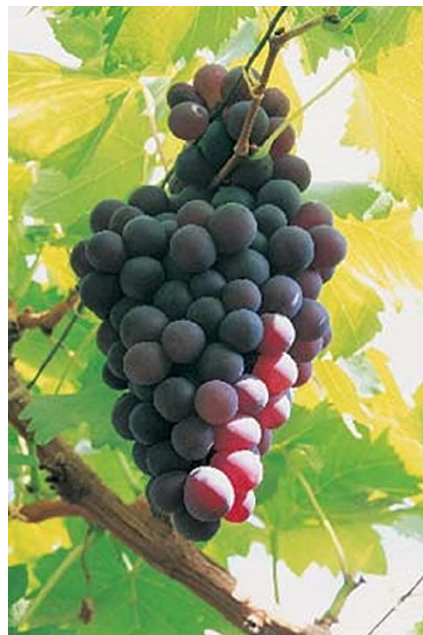
**I rejoiced when I heard them say:
'Let us go to God's house.'
And now our feet are standing
Within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

**Jerusalem is built as a city
Strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up,
The tribes of the Lord.**

**For Israel's law it is,
There to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgement
Of the house of David.**

Reflection on the Gospel: We continue with the teaching of Jesus. Saint John sets this teaching at the time of the Lord's Last Supper in the Upper Room but it draws from all the things Jesus had said on his travels up & down the country. To shepherds he talked about protecting the lambs, the vulnerable.

Here the text refers to those producing grapes & wine. Vines don't always need good soil & can grow in arid conditions but unnecessary branches take energy from the harvest. So, if the grower knows what they are doing, they respond well to pruning. If not, the crop can be ruined.



Faith in action means we grow towards the light & allow those parts of us that prefer the shadows to be pruned or wither away. Jesus suggests that we are kept to living a good & abundant life by drinking in deeply the Word of God.

Alleluia, alleluia!
Make your home in me, as I make mine in you,
says the Lord;
whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty.
Alleluia!

A Reading From the Holy Gospel According to John 15: 1 -8

Jesus said to his disciples,

‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.
Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away,
and every branch that does bear fruit
he prunes to make it bear even more.
You are pruned already,
by means of the word that I have spoken to you.

Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.
As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,
but must remain part of the vine,
neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.
Whoever remains in me, with me in him,
bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me
is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers;
these branches are collected and thrown on the fire,
and they are burnt.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,
you may ask what you will and you shall get it.

It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit,
and then you will be my disciples.’

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD