



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 wends 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

St. Agnes • St. Boniface • St. John the Evangelist

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Fifth Sunday of Easter (B)

All Branches Must Cling to the Vine to Blossom and Bear Fruit

What a beautiful metaphor Christ shared in the Upper Room! Jesus was trying to help His disciples understand the gift of Divine Grace and how the lives of Christians must stay joined to the glorified life of Jesus to be nourished, sustained, and grow to fruitfulness.

Like any master gardener of a vineyard, God our Father delights in each of us whom He plants in His garden. He is passionate about our growth, and He wants us to reach the fruitful potential of our souls in this life so that we may fulfill our purpose in His vineyard here on earth.

He fertilizes the soil to help us grow. He waters, weeds, and prunes our vines to help us become all we were meant to be. God knows the beautiful fruitfulness and growth that we can experience in His perfect plan. He watches over each of His vines with loving care.

Our souls are made to be the perfect reflection of Christ. God the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit, watches over us with loving guidance and protection and wants our souls to grow in love and holiness. There are times in the garden of our lives when enemies slip in and threaten the beauty and very existence of our spiritual lives. If one isn't careful, bad soil, pests, predators, parasites, dryness, and weeds can be very destructive. We will only bear fruit if we are pruned of everything unhealthy to our souls, and we must be sure to cling fast to the vine of Christ who strengthens us.

Our spiritual lives are dependent on the gift of Divine Grace and our souls are nourished and sustained by the love of Christ. It is vital that we trust Him with our whole hearts to do whatever is needed in our lives for our best growth. We must trust Christ and always stick close to Him.

As much as plants need air, sunshine, and water, a branch is just as reliant upon the vine. Without the vine – Jesus – our souls will shrivel and die. Letting go of our own selfish wills – by fully surrendering to God's Holy Will and trusting His pruning and weeding in our lives – will surely help our souls blossom, bear fruit, and become all we were made to be by our Father.

Mass Schedule & Intentions For the week of April 29, 2024

Mon.	Apr	29	4:00 PM	SJ	No Daily Mass
Tues.	Apr	30	5:30 PM	SA	No Daily Mass
Wed.	May	01	6:15 PM	SJ	No Daily Mass
Thurs.	May	02	5:30 PM	SB	No Daily Mass
Fri.	May	03	8:30 AM	SJ	No Daily Mass
Sun.	May	05	8:00 AM	SJ	People of the Parish
Sun.	May	05	9:30 AM	SA	Davenport Family
Sun.	May	05	11:00 AM	SB	Joleen Kalinowski


A graphic with the words "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" in a bubbly, red font with a white outline, set against a dark red background.

Ann Rosfeld April 30th
Coleman Sierks May 2nd
Suzanne DeLosh May 4th

Ministry Schedule

Date: May 5th	St. Agnes	St. Boniface	St. John's
Time	<u>Sunday 9:30 AM</u>	<u>Sunday 11:00 AM</u>	<u>Sunday 8:00 AM</u>
Hospitality	Sue D. & Pam L.	Dan & Jo T.	Toby & Lisa K.
Lector	Pam L.	Emily P.	Kristy O.
Server		Charli P. & Amelia P.	Leo W. & Tate B.
EMHC	Sue D. & Pam L.	Rod B. & Mike P.	Steve & Cindy F.
Communion to shut ins or Music		Mike P.	Music: Bobbi & Kelsey

<u>St. Agnes</u>	<u>St. Boniface</u>	<u>St. John's</u>
<p>Our Gifts to God & Church April 21, 2024 <u>Total Collection:</u> \$2714.00</p> <p><u>Diocesan Appeal</u> Dollar Goal = \$4014/so far \$2970 Donor Goal: 9 out of 16</p> <p>Thrift Store Open May 3rd from 9AM to 4PM</p> <p>Needed: Mass Intentions for St Agnes.</p> <p>Mother's Day Breakfast served by the Knights following mass May 5th.</p>	<p>Our Gifts to God & Church April 21, 2024 <u>Total Collection:</u> \$661.87</p> <p><u>Diocesan Appeal</u> Dollar Goal = \$7306/ so far \$7330 Donor Goal: 16 out of 19 The dollar goal is REACHED</p> <p>This Week No CCD until August</p>	<p>Our Gifts to God & Church April 21, 2024 <u>Total Collection:</u> \$526.04</p> <p><u>Diocesan Appeal</u> Dollar Goal=\$5001/so far \$5020 Donor Goal: 15 out of 17 The dollar goal is REACHED!</p> <p>This Week No CCD until August</p>



TOTUS TUUS
**STUDENT
 REGISTRATION**
Please see the form below before
 registering your student

Please get your children in grades 1-12 registered for
 Totus Tuus:
 July 21-26th at St John's in Stapleton

Click this link to register; [Totus Tuus Registration \(jotform.com\)](https://totustuus.com/jotform.com)

Quotes for Today
Pope Saint Pius V (1502-1572)

"You are the salt of the earth! You are the light of the world! See to it that the people are edified by your example, by the purity of your lives, by the moderation of your conduct, and the brilliance of your holiness! God does not ask of you mere ordinary virtue. He demands downright perfection!"

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 St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church Acts 14:5–18 Jn 14:21–26	April 30 Easter Weekday Acts 14:19–28 Jn 14:27–31a	May 1 Easter Weekday Acts 15:1–6 Jn 15:1–8	May 2 St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church Acts 15:7–21 Jn 15:9–11	May 3 Sts. Phillip and James, Apostles 1 Cor 15:1–8 Jn 14:6–14	May 4 Easter Weekday Acts 16:1–10 Jn 15:18–21	May 5 Sixth Sunday of Easter 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