

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 04/28/2024.

As we heard from the mouth of Jesus in today's Gospel from John, God is asking us **to bear fruit**. In other words, our discipleship is more than worshipping according to certain guidelines and precepts. It's about letting what we believe and who we follow truly shape the decisions we make, and the actions we take. This is the "**loving in deed and truth**" we heard about in today's Second Reading. Put simply, our faith should visibly shape the very way we live and interact with others in this world.

So, how do we start making better decisions? How do we start bearing the right kind of fruit?

"Remain in me, as I remain in you."

That seems like a good place to start. "Remain in me, as I remain in you." Jesus appears to be inviting us into a very unique kind of relationship...the most intimate kind...one in which God and human beings' dwell within one another. And it is only possible because of the Incarnation. God broke into our world so, that we could enter his. He shared in our life so that we could share in his. **He dwells in our hearts, souls, and minds so that we can dwell in him.** This is the sort of intimacy and communion God is offering us, an intimacy we so desperately need.

Life is hard. It is complicated...so many choices and so many temptations. We are going to make mistakes. We know that and God knows that. But he also has put before us a wonderful opportunity, one which shows us just how much he loves us. God does not want us to go through life as bystanders. Rather, he wants us to be active players in the drama of which he is the director. A drama in which the world grows closer and closer to being the beautiful place God created it to be...a place of love, generosity, mercy and kindness.

And the only way to do that is to **stay close to him**, and allow him to **remain close to us**, and live in us through his Spirit. Then our lives will yield good fruit...not because of our wisdom or goodness, but because of God's. A wisdom and goodness which dwells in us and shines forth from us in every word and deed. This is the fruit which will transform the world. This is the fruit that is only possible when it is God who is **our strength, our hope, and our life.**