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 PETITION & THANKSGIVING LETTERS
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Pruning and Nourishing the Vine

Today's Gospel is on the famous imagery of Jesus, as the vine, and we, his disciples, as the branches. This imagery is very vivid, as we can immediately understand the need to remain in close relationship with Jesus if we wish to bear fruit. If we move apart or try to live on our strength, we will surely wither and die. But the imagery that strikes me is the image of God as the vine-dresser: *"Every branch that does not bear fruit, he prunes to make it bear even more"*. As we do not grow vines in Singapore for the harvest of grapes or to make wine, we may not understand the full extent of this imagery. But I was informed by a person who grew vines that until and unless the vines are pruned, they will not bear grapes. So pruning is critical for the growth of the vine and for its branches to bear the grapes.

So too in our lives, when the Vine-dresser 'prunes' us. God cuts off the parts of me which are brittle, yellowing and not bearing much fruit. Pruning is not pleasant because it requires cutting off and giving away parts of us. But I see his hand in the life-lessons that teach me to be more humble, patient and generous; and to get rid of the pride, anger and selfishness. But pruning sometimes involves cutting off healthy branches; when the leaves are still green and the flowers are blooming. This is painful! But the Vine-dresser sees ahead. As St John says in today's 2nd Reading: *"... God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything"*.

God knows that we may have to lose something in the present, to gain something better in the future. Right now, I have this strong prompting to move from my present job which I enjoy (for most parts) for something unknown. The Vine-dresser is cutting me from my comfort zone and asking me to trust in his providence and plans for me. He will show me where I can grow stronger and bear more fruit.

Next, I reflect on what Nature (and God) does with the pruned branches, leaves and flowers. As I am trying to make my own compost, I now save the banana and other vegetable peels, egg shells, used tea leaved and ground coffee. I then add dry waste like pruned leaves and flowers. I finally return all of these to the soil so that they become nutrients for the growing garden. I realize that God takes all my adversities and pain, and returns them to my life so that I can learn and grow. As I look back at my life, I see how I have become the person I now am - independent, more confident, more adaptable and able to preserve through uncertainty and hardships: *"That which does not kill us, makes us stronger."* (Friedrich Nietzsche)

If I, a mere Branch, am flowering and bearing fruits today, then all Praise to God, the Vine-dresser!

Reflection by Ros

Novena notes



5th Sunday of Easter
 Year B
 29 April 2018

Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 29 April	Ac 9:26-31; 1 Jn 3:18-24; Jn 15:1-8 You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly.
Mon, 30 April St. Pius V, Pope	Ac 14:5-18; Jn 14:21-26 Not to us, Lord, but to our name give the glory.
Tue, 1 May St. Joseph the Worker	Ac 11:19-26; Jn 10:22-30 O praise the Lord, all you nations!
Wed, 2 May	1 Pt 5:5-14; Mk 16:15-20 I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.
Thu, 3 May	Ac 13:13-25; Jn 13:16-20 I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord.
Fri, 4 May	Ac 13:26-33; Jn 14:1-6 You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day.
Sat, 5 May	Ac 13:44-52; Jn 14:7-14 All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)
 Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm
 Confession: Half an hour before Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)
 Time: 6.30pm

SUNDAY MASS
 Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon, 5.30pm

PUBLIC HOLIDAY
 Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS
 Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION
 English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm
 Mandarin: 2.30pm
 Confession: After every Novena Service except after the 11am service.

DAYS OF OBLIGATION
 Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)
 6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

Novena notes



RCIA English Programme

We are starting our new RCIA Programme. It will begin from 3rd July 2018 to 31st May 2019. RCIA is for adults - 18 years and above, who are interested to know more about the Catholic faith. The application form can be obtained at the Church Office. The closing date for application is on 31st May 2018.

RCIA Chinese Programme

We are starting our new Chinese RCIA Programme on 7th July 2018 every Saturday from 3.15pm to 5.15pm. The application form can be obtained at the Church Office or you can download from www.novenachurch.com

Labour Day, 1st May 2018

Please take note there will be **NO** lunch time Mass on 1st May 2018, Tuesday. Masses will be at 8am and 6.30pm.

Feast of St Joseph - 1st May

St. Joseph is the Patron Saint for the workers. This Saint, who was given the noble task of caring and watching over the Virgin Mary and Jesus, now cares for and watches over the Church and models for all the dignity of human work.



Donations for our new pews

The pews give us the place to sit in silence, pray and worship. Your gift would be etched on a plaque affixed to the side of the pews.

Brochures can be obtained from the Reception Office.

Safety and Security in the Church

When the Church is full, please do not enter. For safety and security no standing along the aisles on Sundays and Days of Obligations. Thank you.

Good Shepherd Sunday

The second collection last Sunday amounted to \$11,243/-.

Maintenance of the new church

Now that our building fund target has been met, all further donations will go towards our Church Maintenance Fund.

You can donate by cheque. You can now also donate via GIRO.

Kindly issue your cheque payable to:

Redemptorist Fathers Maintenance Fund.

Those who wish to donate via GIRO, please obtain the GIRO Form from the Reception desk.

Our credit card machine can now accept donations to the Maintenance Fund via Pay Wave.

Thank you very much for your generous support.

