ENTRANCE ANTIPHON
O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of all the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

GLORIA
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

COLLECT
Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism may, under your protective care, bear much fruit, and come to the joys of life eternal. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FIRST READING
Acts 9:26-31
A reading from the Acts of the Apostles. When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him; they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea and sent him off from there to Tarsus. The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING 1 John 3:18-24
A reading from the first letter of St John. My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are the children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything. My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us. The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
Alleluia, alleluia! Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 15:1-8
A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. 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. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE Apostles’ Creed
I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord, (all bow during the next three lines) who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS
O God, who by the wonderful exchange effected in this sacrifice have made us partakers of the one supreme Godhead, grant, we pray, that, as we have come to know your truth, we may make it ours by a worthy way of life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON
I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION
Graciously be present to your people, we pray, O Lord, and lead those you have imbued with heavenly mysteries to pass from former ways to newness of life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PSALM
Psalm 21
Response: You, Lord, are my praise in the great assembly. or Alleluia!
The image of the vine and the branches is one which speaks of close union and intimacy. It is one of life flowing from one part of the plant to the others.

For disciples to bear fruit means their remaining united to Jesus, the true vine. They are pruned, or made clean, by the word of Jesus which they have accepted. But the Father is involved in this process, pruning those branches which are fruitful so that they will bear even more, and cutting off those who have become separated from the source of vitality and fertility. The harvest Jesus is referring to is the result of the disciples' carrying out Jesus’ command to love. This remaining in Jesus is therefore something which the disciple actively does: it is not a state of being. Being a disciple also involves growth, as suggested by the image of the vine. The vine and its branches are living: if something stops growing, it dies. If the disciple remains in Jesus and his words, which are God's revelation, then they will give life. But the disciple must remain connected to Jesus and his teaching.

This fruitful union between Jesus and his disciples, then and now, leads to the glory of the Father. It is to the Father that Jesus always looks and refers. The disciples are to repeat, in their relationship with Jesus, what Jesus had with the Father: a loving mutuality shown by the unconditional observing of his commandments.

**THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES (JOHN 15:1-8)**

The vine is a common image for the people of Israel in the Hebrew Scriptures. The vineyard is used by Jesus as a metaphor for the people of Israel.

The only moral command given in the Fourth Gospel is “Love one another as I have loved you.”

Wine in abundance is used as a symbol of the Messianic Kingdom: this is the meaning of the first Sign at Cana, where Jesus turns water into wine.

**REFLECT**

On these Sundays in Eastertide, the Scriptures invite us to reflect on our personal relationship with Jesus. It is easy to think of being a disciple as doing certain things or living in a certain kind of way, perhaps one which distinguishes us from the people around us. But if we read the Gospel of John carefully, we find that there is very little of what we might call moral instruction: there is no long Sermon on the Mount as in Matthew’s account. The only command which we find is one which sums up everything: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

It is no accident that the Fourth Evangelist has chosen the image of the vine and the branches to illustrate what the Church, the People of God, should be. The vine is alive and growing. It is fruitful, producing grapes which give wine, a source of joy and conviviality to human beings. To be at its most healthy, the branches need to be tended, pruned where necessary to keep them at their most productive. But the branches are not self-sufficient: they draw their life from the trunk. This is the lesson the evangelist wants to put before us: unless we as individuals keep the personal channel of communication open between ourselves and Jesus, then our life as a disciple is compromised and the life and fruitfulness of the community, of the vine, is diminished; it is not as healthy as it ought to be. Pope John XXIII said that “we are not here to look after a museum, but to cultivate a flourishing garden of life.” Is our corner of the vineyard a museum or a flourishing garden?