

April 29, 2018

Fifth Sunday of Easter



St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

Weekly Reflection



Fifth Sunday of Easter A STUBBORN VINE After moving into my present home ten years ago, I was pleased to find that the back yard's landscaping included a very healthy-looking clematis, a quick-spreading vine that yields large, beautiful, star-shaped flowers. I had always wanted a yard with a clematis vine growing in it. Moving into the house in the summer, I was able to experience the beauty of hundreds of blossoms that covered the vines for most of the season. Since that summer, I have tried, year after year, to tend to this plant. I have read books about these easy-to-grow vines, consulted other gardeners, and searched the Internet for clues. I prune the clematis at the proper time and apply lime to the soil around the vine. Every summer for the last nine years, the total number of blossoms each year barely reaches five. I have been tempted to tear out the vine and plant a new one, yet I always remember those hundreds of blossoms that first summer and I am committed to trying again, year after year.

FAITH BLOSSOMS Our faith lives are sometimes like the reluctant clematis. Even when we try to nourish and tend our spiritual lives, we often experience only a few "blooms." The metaphor Jesus used, the vine and the branches, is a beautiful image and says much about persistence in the faith for today's believer. Sometimes our conversion experiences are slow in coming, and take lots of time and tending. As long as we keep our attention focused on the Lord, there is always hope that deep faith and conversion will blossom within and around us. The words of the Lord that continue to encourage us are embedded within today's Gospel passage: "Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Today's Readings: Acts 9:26-31; Psalm 22:26-28, 30-32; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8

