

**THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES**  
**April 29, 2018**  
**The Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**Acts of the Apostles 9:26-31 + 1 John 3:18-24 + John 15:1-8**



**Reflection by: Alice McCoy, OP**

Reflecting on the readings for this Sunday brought me to see that ***all is connected***. In this Easter season, as I immerse myself in this season of blooming, yet not giving up the use of my cell phone and computer, the readings show that nature and technology are connected. When you lose connection, nothing can be pulled up. If you are not connected to the proper server, your computer shuts down. If you don't work your garden, turning the soil, pulling up the weeds, watering the ground and planting the seeds in the right place, nothing will grow. What did grow will wither and have to be plucked away to clear the ground.

In our baptism, we were connected to our "***vine grower***," "***our server***," i.e., our ***God***. As disciples, we can only accomplish our mission, the ***call*** that God gave us when we were created, if we remain connected to ***Jesus, the Vine***. That cannot be done by being faithful "church-goers" without being faithful "church-doers." It's not "either/or," it's "both/and." Dressing up right for church is not just the hats, clothes and hair. As we prepare our children for First Communion and Confirmation during this season, it is essential that we teach them, by our words and actions, to remain deeply planted in Jesus and his teachings so that growth will happen. Providing them with an appropriate sacramental outfit will help celebrate the importance of the event, but there is more to the "appearance" that we disciples need to bring into our world. We can't do that unless we remain connected to our "***Vine***."

As true disciples we must ***love not just in word or in speech, but in deed and in truth***. Until the disciples became aware of Paul's actions in the name of Jesus, they were afraid to accept him. Once they saw that his actions mirrored his faith, he became part of the newly growing church.

***Remain in me, as I remain in you.***  
***I am the vine, you are the branches.***  
***Whoever remains in me and I in him***  
***will bear much fruit..***  
***because***  
***without me you can do nothing!***  
***If you remain in me***  
***and my words remain in you***  
***ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you!***