

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Today's readings:

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

Epistle: 1 John 4:1-11

Holy Gospel: John 15:1-8

Jesus Christ Is the True Vine Who Bears Much Fruit in Us

“God is love,” and He manifested Himself to us by sending *“his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him”* (1 John 4:9,16). By the ministry of the Gospel, *“he has given us of his Spirit,”* so that we also believe and confess *“that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.”* In this way, we *“abide in him and he in us,”* and we *“love one another”* (1 John 4:2,7,13). Such divine love is exemplified in Philip’s preaching of *“the good news about Jesus”* to the Ethiopian eunuch. And when *“they came to some water,”* the eunuch was baptized into the Gospel that Philip had preached (Acts 8:35-38). That Ethiopian was thereby grafted into *“the true vine,”* Jesus Christ (John 15:1), just as we are. Already we are clean because of the Word that Christ has spoken to us and by the washing of water with His Word. We now abide in Him by faith in His forgiveness. As He abides in us, both body and soul, with His own body and His blood, He *“bears much fruit”* in us (John 15:3-5).

Our Bulletin Comment

Without someone to assist him, the Ethiopian eunuch could not clearly envision the figure God’s Word painted in Isaiah. But the Holy Spirit used Philip to lead him to Jesus, in whom the full picture of the Scriptures comes together. Christ’s generous love and sacrifice is for the sake of the whole world as He delivers forgiveness of sins through Word and Sacrament.