

Christ Church Freemantle Sunday 2nd May – Fifth Sunday of Easter

The May Bank Holiday signals the real start of the "growing season," and all that goes with it. Out come the barbeques and the garden furniture, on go the gardening gloves, while tools and watering cans are unearthed from the shed. The garden centres are busy with people buying bedding plants, while the supermarket shelves are bursting with "just what you need" for the perfect alfresco dining.

The origins of May Day can be traced back to Roman times with Floralia- the festival dedicated to Flora, their goddess of flowers. The Celtic festival of Beltane also contributed to the celebrations on May 1st which gathered momentum during the nineteenth century due to Ruskin's influence. This was perpetuated in primary schools in the fifties at least, when some of us can remember dancing around the Maypole and the crowning of the May Queen.



Leaving aside International workers Day - first observed in 1889, May Day celebrations today are about welcoming the Spring, and our joy in the new growth around us. It reminds us of God's abundant gifts in the natural world.

Today's Gospel reading, (John 15:1-17), is sometimes entitled "Jesus the true vine." It contains the famous lines,

"I am the Vine and you are the branches,
Apart from me, you can do nothing."

BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS
LOVE ♥ joy
PEACE PATIENCE
KINDNESS
goodness FAITH
gentleness FUL
& self-control NESS
GALATIANS 5:22-23

Jesus is speaking to His disciples, but the metaphor is so apt for us. Without God's help, we cannot bear fruit. In Galatians 5 v 22 the Fruits of the Spirit are listed as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Followers of God bear fruit in all manner of ways in the things they do and the people they help. All of us can practice at least some of the Fruits of the Spirit mentioned above.

This Maytime, as we tend our gardens, metaphorical or real, let us remember that God is glorified by the fruit we bear in our lives.

Mary Scott