

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: Acts 9:26-31
1 John 3:18-24

Gospel: John 15:1-8

"Dad, what are you doing with the pruning shears? Aren't we getting ready for Mass?" Vincent asked.

"We are getting ready for Mass, Vincent. That is exactly why I have them. Let's get everybody together for our Sunday Gospel reading, and you will see what I mean," Dad said.

All the Pauline children came and sat around the dining room table. Mom came in and plopped the straggly-looking living room plant right in the middle of them.

"Is this breakfast?" Vincent teased.

"Cute, Vincent!" Mary Clare said. "I bet it has something to do with the Gospel reading for today."

"You are right, Mary Clare!" Dad said, acting very dramatically. "I, the *Amazing* Mister Pauline, am going to take my *amazing* pruning shears, and trim off several branches of this *amazing* plant. My lovely assistant, 'Vanna' Pauline, will hand one to each of you for your catechetical pleasure!"

"Dad, you are so silly!" Hillary laughed.

Dad trimmed off several large branches. Even though the plant was now smaller, it suddenly looked much better. Mom handed one of the



withered branches to each of the children.

"Now, who can tell me what the trunk of this plant is made of?" Dad asked.

"It's made of bark and sap," said Vincent. "We studied that in biology just last week."

"Now, Everyone, look at your branch. What is your branch made of?"

"Bark and sap!" said Vincent. "They are both made up the same!"

"Okay, great. Now, who can tell me what is going to happen to the branches that you are holding in your hands?" Dad wondered.

"That's easy, Dad," Lucy volunteered. "Without being attached to the plant, they are going to die for sure."

"Exactly right!" Dad said. "Jesus says right here in our Gospel reading for today, *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.*' (John 15:5) The branches have the same make-up as the vine. Or in other words, we are so much a part of Christ, and He is so much a part of us, that if we 'prune' ourselves away from Him, it can only mean death. When we are firmly joined to Christ, we can bear bushels and bushels of fruit!"

"I'll be an apple!" shouted Vincent.

"Cute, Vincent!" said Mary Clare again, as she shook her head and laughed. "Well, Dad ... I mean, 'the *Amazing* Mister Pauline,' what happens now?" You could tell that the Pauline kids were really enjoying this.

Dad stood up and swept a mock cape over his shoulder. The kids clapped their approval.

"Thank you, thank you, Children, and hold your applause, please!" Dad said in his dramatic voice again. "My lovely assistant, 'Vanna' is now going to tell you what you have won!"

Mom stood up, tossed back her hair, and said in her best stage voice, "Through His victory on the cross and by staying close to Jesus, you have won ... an all-expense-paid trip ... to *HEAVEN*!" she exclaimed.

"Sometimes I wonder about this family!" Mary Clare said, and everyone broke up laughing.