

GOSPEL PEARLS

We must fight every day

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Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and

withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 15, 1-8)

When we are idolatrous, we replace God with lower things in our human heart. To warn us of this danger, Jesus compares us to vine branches from which fruit hangs. As branches not properly rooted in the vine bear no fruit, they are destined to dry out and be burned. The same happens when we give in to the illusion be in the sole arbiters of what is good and what is bad while pretending to be God. We inflict punishment on ourselves and our neighbour. May we fight every day to resist the temptation to choose according to our own desires rather than according to the will of God.