

7th Sunday of Easter
Year C

Reading 1

**When the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated the following Sunday,
the second reading and Gospel from the Seventh Sunday of Easter
may be read on the Sixth Sunday of Easter.**

Citation: Acts, Chap. 7, Verses 55-60
Acts 7: 55-60

Martyrdom. Proclaim this from the sad realization of how cruel humans can be to each other, particularly when one side will not listen to the other at all. Be convinced as Stephen is of what he saw. Only Stephen is heard. First in a voice calling attention to the facts as a witness would do. Then, calling out for Jesus' loving reception at death. Finally, asking God's mercy and forgiveness on Stephen's antagonists. Use volume to call attention to the seriousness of what this is all about.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Stephen,
filled with the Holy Spirit,
looked up intently to heaven
and saw the glory of God
and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

(awe throughout this sentence)
(very short pause)

and Stephen said,
"Behold, I see the heavens opened
and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

(raise voice volume a bit)
“ “ (very short pause)

But they cried out in a loud voice,
covered their ears,
and rushed upon him together.

(alarm!)
(don't want to hear!)
(determined!) (very short pause)

They threw him out of the city,
and began to stone him.

(strong anger; separate "threw him" from "out")
(very short pause)

The witnesses laid down their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. (very short pause)

As they were stoning Stephen,
he called out,
"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
Then he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice,
"Lord, do not hold this sin against them";
and when he said this,
he fell asleep.

(raise voice volume a bit)
(raise volume some more)
(sadness)
(finality)

The word of the Lord.

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**When the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated the following Sunday,
the second reading and Gospel from the Seventh Sunday of Easter
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Citation: Revelation, Chap. 22, Verses 12-14, 16-17, 22
Revelation 22: 12-14, 16-17, 22

John is reporting his vision. His purpose is to establish that Jesus is God, that He restored humanity to a right relationship with the Father, and that His on-going mission of conversion for all of humanity will not cease. He also still expects Jesus' imminent coming! There is a great deal of feeling in this passage. Bring it alive with your proclamation!

A reading from the Book of Revelation

I,
John,
heard a voice saying to me: (very short pause)

"Behold,
I am coming soon. (very short pause)

I bring with me the recompense I will give to each
according to his deeds. (almost parenthetical)

I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the first and the last,
the beginning and the end." (voice goes up and then down)
(voice goes up and then down)
(voice goes up and then down)

Blessed are they who wash their robes
so as to have the right to the tree of life
and enter the city through its gates. (short pause)

"I, Jesus, (insistent)
sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches.
I am the root and offspring of David,
the bright morning star." (very short pause)

The Spirit and the bride say, (be increasingly assuring!)
"Come."

Let the hearer say, "
"Come."

Let the one who thirsts come forward, "
and the one who wants it
receive the gift of life-saving water. "

The one who gives this testimony says, (very firm)
"Yes, I am coming soon." (Jesus talking) (very short pause)

Amen! (John speaking) (very emphatic!)
Come, Lord Jesus! (almost begging)

The word of the Lord.

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Citation: John, Chap 17, Verses 20-26
John 17: 20-26

Jesus' prayer is a summary of His view of Himself and His relationship with His Father. He expands this to include his community of disciples and, by extension, all of humanity. Take your time as the images may be difficult for some to put together. The focus of relationship is what religion is all about. Help your listeners understand this.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Lifting up his eyes to heaven, Jesus prayed,
saying:

"Holy Father,

I pray not only for them,

(prayerful but firm)

but also for those who will believe in me through their word,

(voice down slightly)

so that they may all be one,

(slower pace remainder of sentence)

as you, Father, are in me

and I in you,

that they also may be in us,

that the world may believe that you sent me.

(short pause)

And I have given them the glory you gave me,

so that they may be one,

(very short pause)

as we are one,

(voice goes up)

I in them

(voice goes down)

and you in me,

(firm, almost a command)

that they may be brought to perfection as one,

"

that the world may know that you sent me,

(a bit gentler)

and that you loved them

(gentle) (short pause)

even as you loved me.

Father, they are your gift to me.

("Thank you")

I wish that where I am

(change voice tone?)

they also may be with me,

(almost dreamy)

that they may see my glory that you gave me,

"

because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

" (short pause)

Righteous Father,

the world also does not know you,

(assertive; firm)

but I know you,

"

and they know that you sent me.

"

I made known to them your name

and I will make it known,

(convinced)

that the love with which you loved me

"

may be in them

"

and I in them."

The Gospel of the Lord.