

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Year A

Reading 1

Citation: Ezekiel, Chap. 37, Verses 12-14
Ezekiel 37: 12-14

The end of the section of Ezekiel describing the dry bones of Israel. God is almost remorseful because of what has happened to Israel. He is vowing that the world will be different, now. Be convinced as God is convinced.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

Thus says the LORD GOD:

(Get attention!) (God speaking here)

O my people,
I will open your graves and have you rise from them,
and bring you back to the land of Israel.

(almost sad?) (very short pause)
(genuine concern)
(a promise!)

Then

you shall know
that I am the LORD,
when I open your graves
and have you rise from them,

(very short pause)
(raise volume a bit; emphasize each word)
(quieter tone)
(treat the comma as a period) (PAUSE)

O my people!
I will put my spirit in you
that you may live,
and I will settle you upon your land;

(not quite full excitement)
(God's promising!)
(very short pause)
(short pause)

thus you shall know
that I am the LORD.

(slow down)

I have promised,
and I will do it,
says the LORD.

(strong emphasis!)
(say each word separately) (insistent)
(affirmation)

The word of the Lord.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Year A

Reading 2

Citation: Romans, Chap. 8, Verses 8-11
Romans 8: 8-11

Paul is appealing to us to rethink who and what we are. We are capable of communion with God! All it takes is accepting Jesus so that His Spirit lives in us. There is an assurance, here too, that if we will accept Jesus all else will readily fall into place in our lives. Be the wise, reassuring counselor Paul is attempting to be.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

Those who are in the flesh
cannot please God.

(Paul is not angry or upset)
(short pause)

But you are not in the flesh;
on the contrary,
you are in the spirit,
if only the Spirit of God dwells in you.

(very short pause)
(almost parenthetical)

(slow) (parenthetical)

Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ
does not belong to him.

(again, no anger or upset)
(very short pause)

But
if Christ is in you,
although the body is dead
because of sin,
the spirit is alive
because of righteousness.

(parenthetical)
(parenthetical)
(firmly)
(very short pause)

If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead
dwells in you,
the one who raised Christ from the dead
will give life to your mortal bodies also,
through his Spirit
dwelling in you.

(very short pause)

(very short pause)

The word of the Lord.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

There is a Long and Short Form of this Gospel

GOSPEL
Longer Form

Citation: John, Chap. 11, Verses 1-45
John 11: 1-45

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. There is much theology, here, particularly as John attempts to help us understand the differences between Christ's view of the world and humanity's place in it with what the people of His time had been led to believe. Jesus is both gentle and insistent with the decision to return to Bethany and in his dealings with Martha. He is contrasting what He is teaching with what the people believed. There is much emotion at the tomb. Jesus is in charge. You need to tell the story with as much feeling as you can muster from your understanding of the significance of the story for your listeners, today.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Now a man was ill,
Lazarus from Bethany,
the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

(almost parenthetical)
(parenthetical)

Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil
and dried his feet with her hair;
it was her brother Lazarus who was ill.

(matter-of-factly)
(parenthetical)

So the sisters sent word to Jesus saying,
"Master,
the one you love is ill."

(very short pause)

When Jesus heard this he said,
"This illness is not to end in death,
it is for the glory of God,
that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

(upbeat, firm)
(very short pause)

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.
So
when he heard that he was ill,
he remained for two days in the place where he was.

(matter-of-factly)

Then after this
he said to his disciples,
"Let us go back to Judea."

(almost as an announcement)

The disciples said to him,
"Rabbi,
the Jews were just trying to stone you,
and you want to go back there?"
Jesus answered,
"Are there not twelve hours in a day?
If one walks during the day,
he does not stumble,

("don't you remember" tone)
“ “

(instructive tone)

Proclamation Format

because he sees the light of this world.
But if one walks at night,
he stumbles,
because the light is not in him."

(almost parenthetical)

(voice goes down)

He said this, and then told them,
"Our friend Lazarus is asleep,
but I am going to awaken him."

(reassuring tone)

So the disciples said to him,
"Master,
if he is asleep,
he will be saved."
But Jesus was talking about his death,
while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep.
So then Jesus said to them clearly,
"Lazarus has died.
And I am glad for you that I was not there,
that you may believe.
Let us go to him."
So Thomas,
called Didymus,
said to his fellow disciples,
"Let us also go to die with him."

(almost beseeching?)

“

“

(parenthetical)

“

(firm; positive)

(parenthetical)

(2 stresses) (very short pause)

When Jesus arrived,
he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.
Now Bethany was near Jerusalem,
only about two miles away.
And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary
to comfort them about their brother.

(matter-of-factly)

(almost parenthetical)

(short pause)

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming,
she went to meet him;
but Mary sat at home.
Martha said to Jesus,
"Lord,
if you had been here,
my brother would not have died.
But even now
I know that whatever you ask of God,
God will give you."
Jesus said to her,
"Your brother will rise."
Martha said to him,
"I know he will rise, in the resurrection
on the last day."
Jesus told her,
"I am the resurrection and the life;

(parenthetical) (very short pause)

(very short pause)

(very short pause)

(firm)

(disregard comma)

(very short pause)

Proclamation Format

whoever believes in me,
even if he dies, (voice goes down slightly)
will live,
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. (very short pause)
Do you believe this?"
She said to him,
"Yes, Lord.
I have come to believe that you are the Christ,
the Son of God,
the one who is coming into the world." (slower; emphasize each word) (very short pause)

When she had said this,
she went and called her sister Mary secretly,
saying,
"The teacher is here and is asking for you." (very short pause)
As soon as she heard this,
she rose quickly and went to him. (a bit faster pace)
For Jesus had not yet come into the village, (parenthetical)
but was still where Martha had met him. " "

So when the Jews
who were with her in the house comforting her (parenthetical)
saw Mary get up quickly and go out,
they followed her,
presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. (parenthetical) (very short pause)

When Mary came to where Jesus was
and saw him,
she fell at his feet and said to him,
"Lord, if you had been here, (almost sobbing!)
my brother would not have died." " "

When Jesus saw her weeping
and the Jews who had come with her weeping,
he became perturbed and deeply troubled, (a little slower?)
and said,
"Where have you laid him?" (almost defeated?)

They said to him,
"Sir,
come and see."
And Jesus wept. (very short pause)
So the Jews said,
"See how he loved him."
But some of them said, (cynical tone?)
"Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something
so that this man would not have died?" " "

So Jesus,
perturbed again,

Proclamation Format

came to the tomb.

It was a cave,
and a stone lay across it.

Jesus said,

"Take away the stone."

(commanding) (very short pause)

Martha,

the dead man's sister,

said to him,

"Lord,

by now there will be a stench;

(very short pause)

he has been dead for four days."

(horror?)

Jesus said to her,

"Did I not tell you

that if you believe

you will see the glory of God?"

(increasing insistence)

(very short pause)

So they took away the stone.

(matter-of-factly)

And Jesus raised his eyes and said,

"Father,

I thank you for hearing me.

I know that you always hear me;

but because of the crowd here I have said this,

that they may believe that you sent me."

(gentle, solicitous)

(very short pause)

And when he had said this,

he cried out in a loud voice,

"Lazarus, come out!"

(raise volume!) (very short pause)

The dead man came out,

tied hand and foot with burial bands,

and his face was wrapped in a cloth.

(amazement!)
“

“ (very short pause)

So Jesus said to them,

"Untie him

and let him go."

(an order)
“

Now

many of the Jews

who had come to Mary

and seen what he had done

began to believe in him.

(story teller; but slowly)

The Gospel of the Lord.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

GOSPEL
Shorter Form

Citation: John, Chap. 11, Verses 3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45
John 11: 3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The sisters of Lazarus sent word to Jesus, saying, (a storyteller relating events)

"Master,

the one you love is ill."

When Jesus heard this he said,

"This illness is not to end in death,

but is for the glory of God,

that the Son of God may be glorified through it." (very short pause)

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

So when he heard that he was ill,

he remained for two days in the place where he was. (very short pause)

Then after this he said to his disciples,

"Let us go back to Judea." (voice goes down)

When Jesus arrived,

he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. (surprise!)

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming,

she went to meet him;

but Mary sat at home (parenthetical.)

Martha said to Jesus,

"Lord,

if you had been here,

my brother would not have died. (pleading?)

But even now I know that whatever you ask of God,

God will give you." (very short pause)

Jesus said to her,

"Your brother will rise." (reassuring but strong, firm)

Martha said,

"I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." (disregard comma)

Jesus told her,

"I am the resurrection and the life;

whoever believes in me,

even if he dies,

will live,

and everyone who lives

and believes in me

will never die. (voice goes up)

Do you believe this?" (almost parenthetical)

(very short pause)

(very short pause)

Proclamation Format

She said to him, "Yes, Lord.

I have come to believe that you are the Christ,
the Son of God,
the one who is coming into the world."

(confident!)

“

“

He became perturbed and deeply troubled,
and said,

"Where have you laid him?"

(kind; sorrowful; firm)

They said to him,

"Sir,

(same kindness, sorrow)

come and see."

And Jesus wept.

(slowly, sorrowfully) (very short pause)

So the Jews said, "See how he loved him"

(concern)

But

some of them said,

"Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something
so that this man would not have died?"

(disdainful tone)

(very short pause)

So Jesus,

perturbed again,

came to the tomb.

It was a cave,

and a stone lay across it.

Jesus said,

"Take away the stone."

(slightly louder; commanding)

Martha,

the dead man's sister,

(parenthetical)

said to him,

"Lord,

by now there will be a stench;

("Oh, No!")

he has been dead for four days."

Jesus said to her,

"Did I not tell you that if you believe

(very firm)

you will see the glory of God?"

(giving instruction)

So they took away the stone.

And Jesus raised his eyes and said,

"Father,

I thank you for hearing me.

I know that you always hear me;

but

because of the crowd here I have said this,

(parenthetical)

that they may believe that you sent me."

(very short pause)

And when he had said this,

he cried out in a loud voice,

"Lazarus,

(raise volume sharply)

come out!"

“ “

Proclamation Format

The dead man came out,
tied hand and foot with burial bands,
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.

(an amazed storyteller)

(very short pause)

So Jesus said to them,
"Untie him and let him go"

(gentle but commanding)

Now
many of the Jews who had come to Mary
and seen what he had done
began to believe in him.

(steadily slower pace each phrase)

(voice even if not dropping)

The Gospel of the Lord.