

# PENTECOST SUNDAY

## At the Vigil Mass

### Year C

These readings are used at Saturday Evening Mass  
celebrated either before or after Evening Prayer I of Pentecost Sunday

#### There are four optional First Readings

Reading 1  
**OPTION 1**

*Citation: Genesis, Chap. 11, Verses 1-9*  
*Genesis 11: 1-9*

**This is pure story (the spread of humanity all over the world) but with a moral – trying to make your self into God leads to confusion and disintegration. Be the evangelistic story-teller by showing the variety of emotion that plays throughout the tale. Make it plain that migration, by itself, is perfectly OK. Setting people apart as better than they are becomes the problem.**

#### **A reading from the Book of Genesis**

The whole world spoke the same language,  
using the same words. (short pause)

While the people were migrating in the east,  
they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. (very short pause)

They said to one another,  
"Come, let us mold bricks and harden them with fire."  
They used bricks for stone,  
and bitumen for mortar. (very short pause)

Then they said,  
"Come, let us build ourselves a city (pride growing)  
and a tower with its top in the sky,  
and so make a name for ourselves; (definite selfish pride attitude)  
otherwise  
we shall be scattered all over the earth." " (two separate stresses)

The LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the people had built. (very short pause)

Then the LORD said:  
"If now, (a sense of growing concern!)  
while they are one people, all speaking the same language,  
they have started to do this,  
nothing will later stop them from doing whatever they presume to do. "

Let us then go down there and confuse their language,  
so that one will not understand what another says." (the planned solution!)  
(very short pause)

Thus the LORD scattered them from there  
all over the earth, (a sense of finality)  
and they stopped building the city. " (very short pause)

**Proclamation Format**

That is why it was called Babel,  
because there the LORD confused the speech of all the world.

It was from that place that he scattered them all over the earth.

**The word of the Lord.**

# PENTECOST SUNDAY

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Reading 1  
OPTION 2

*Citation: Exodus, Chap. 19, Verses 3-8a, 16-20b*  
*Exodus 19: 3-8a, 16-20b*

**God lays out his new covenant with the Israelites. Vary your tone as the story unfolds. How can you convey the sound of God and Moses talking as you describe the noise at the end? Help your listeners hear those sounds.**

### A reading from the Book of Exodus

Moses went up the mountain to God.  
Then the LORD called to him and said,

"Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob;  
tell the Israelites:

(what does God sound like?)

You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians  
and how I bore you up on eagle wings  
and brought you here to myself.

(the "proof" of God's Love)

Therefore,  
if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant  
you shall be my special possession,  
dearer to me than all other people,  
though all the earth is mine.

(stress "if" -- its key)  
(a warm, loving tone)

You shall be to me a kingdom of priests,  
a holy nation.

That is what you must tell the Israelites."

So Moses went and summoned the elders of the people.  
When he set before them all that the LORD had ordered him to tell them,  
the people all answered together,

"Everything the LORD has said, we will do."

(raise volume a bit)

On the morning of the third day  
there were peals of thunder and lightning,  
and a heavy cloud over the mountain,  
and a very loud trumpet blast,  
so that all the people in the camp trembled.

("ominous" surprise in your voice?)

But Moses led the people out of the camp  
to meet God,  
and they stationed themselves at the foot of the mountain.

### **Proclamation Format**

Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke,  
for the LORD came down upon it in fire.

**(WOW!)**  
**(ah-ha!)**

The smoke rose from it as though from a furnace,  
and the whole mountain trembled violently.  
The trumpet blast grew louder and louder,  
while Moses was speaking, and God answering him with thunder.

**(what the conversation sounded like!)**  
“  
“  
“ **(very short pause)**

When the LORD came down to the top of Mount Sinai,  
he summoned Moses to the top of the mountain.

**The word of the Lord.**

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Reading 1  
**OPTION 3**

*Citation: Ezekiel, Chap. 37, Verses 1-14  
Ezekiel 37: 1-14*

**Ezekiel is relating his story of that happened to him. If you can sing the Negro spiritual "Dry Bones" to yourself as you prepare the reading you'll proclaim it just fine. The piece interprets the scene extremely well. As you proclaim the text let some of that feeling creep into your expression and vocalization. Among the purposes of the text is an illustration of God's Love for mankind. Another is the importance of faith in God to act always in our best interest. A third is the idea that without God's Spirit we are nothing. Believe in the presence of His spirit in your life. Let that come out, too.**

### **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel**

The hand of the LORD came upon me,  
and he led me out in the spirit of the LORD  
and set me in the center of the plain,  
which was now filled with bones.

**(awesome!) (very short pause)**

He made me walk among the bones in every direction  
so that I saw how many they were on the surface of the plain.

**(very short pause)**

How dry they were!

**(amazing) (very short pause)**

He asked me:

Son of man,  
can these bones come to life?

**(very short pause)**

I answered,

"Lord GOD, you alone know that."

Then he said to me:

Prophesy over these bones,  
and say to them:

**(commanding; a bit louder?)**

Dry bones,

**(now YOU are commanding)**

hear the word of the LORD!

Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones:

See!

I will bring spirit into you,  
that you may come to life.

I will put sinews upon you,  
make flesh grow over you,

cover you with skin,

and put spirit in you

so that you may come to life and know

that I am the LORD.

**(short pause)**

## Proclamation Format

I,  
Ezekiel,  
prophesied as I had been told,  
and even as I was prophesying I heard a noise;  
it was a rattling as the bones came together,  
bone joining bone.  
I saw the sinews and the flesh come upon them,  
and the skin cover them,  
but there was no spirit in them.

(the “t’s” and “I” are important)  
(amazement overcome him)

“

“

(terrible disappointment!) (very short pause)

Then the LORD said to me:  
Prophesy to the spirit,  
prophesy, son of man,  
and say to the spirit:  
Thus says the Lord GOD:  
From the four winds come, O spirit,  
and breathe into these slain that they may come to life.

(God is insistent with him)

(very short pause)

I prophesied as he told me,  
and the spirit came into them;  
they came alive and stood upright,  
a vast army.

(Oh, WOW!! Amazing)

(short pause)

Then he said to me:  
Son of man,  
these bones are the whole house of Israel.  
They have been saying,  
"Our bones are dried up,  
our hope is lost,  
and we are cut off."

(tone of despair)

Therefore, prophesy and say to them:  
Thus says the Lord GOD:  
O my people,  
I will open your graves  
and have you rise from them,  
and bring you back to the land of Israel.  
Then you shall know  
that I am the LORD,  
when I open your graves  
and have you rise from them,

(almost pleading)

(very short pause)

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

(loving, compassionate tone)

thus you shall know  
that I am the LORD.

**Proclamation Format**

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

(total conviction; strong)  
(separate each word)

**The word of the Lord.**

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Reading 1  
**OPTION 4**

*Citation: Joel, Chap. 3, Verses 1-5  
Joel 3: 1-5*

**You are the mystic describing your visions of the future when Israel will be rescued from bondage. The passage requires dreaminess in your tone – quiet, yet forceful. The conclusion, though, is one of conviction that God will indeed do what He promises so the tone turns to one of certainty.**

### **A reading from the Book of the Prophet Joel**

Thus says the LORD:

I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.

(very short pause)

Your sons and daughters shall prophesy,  
your old men shall dream dreams,  
your young men shall see visions;  
even upon the servants and the handmaids,  
in those days,

[ A LIST ] (separate each phrase)

I will pour out my spirit.

(very short pause)

(conviction) (very short pause)

And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth,  
blood,  
fire,  
and columns of smoke;  
the sun will be turned to darkness,  
and the moon to blood,  
at the coming of the day of the LORD,  
the great and terrible day.

(“...and what’s more!”)  
(another LIST!)

(not disastrous, though)

Then

everyone shall be rescued who calls on the name of the LORD;

(firm)

for on Mount Zion there shall be a remnant,

(softer, promising tone)

as the LORD has said,

(very short pause)

and in Jerusalem

(voice goes up ?)

survivors

whom the LORD shall call.

(total conviction)

**The word of the Lord.**

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## **Reading 2**

*Citation: Romans, Chap 8, Verses 22-27*  
*Romans 8:22-27*

**Paul is encouraging the disciples in Rome to “stay the course” of their Faith. Jesus’ (and God’s) promise to be with us always needs to be understood fully. In a sense, Paul is almost pleading with his listeners to understand. Be Paul; urge your listeners to hear Jesus’ command and keep following it regardless of what others may say or do.**

### **A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans**

Brothers and sisters:

We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains  
even until now;  
and not only that,  
but we ourselves,  
who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,  
we also groan within ourselves  
as we wait for adoption,  
the redemption of our bodies.

(faster – an addition)

(very short pause)

For in hope we were saved.

(an affirmation)

Now hope that sees is not hope.

For who hopes for what one sees?

But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

(conviction)

In the same way,  
the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness;  
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,  
but the Spirit himself  
intercedes with inexpressible groanings.

(an explanation tone)

(voice goes up ?)

And the one who searches hearts  
knows what is the intention of the Spirit,  
because he intercedes for the holy ones  
according to God's will.

(conviction to the end)

(voice goes down ?)

**The word of the Lord.**

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GOSPEL

*Citation: John, Chap. 7, Verses 37-39  
John 7: 37-39*

**John is describing an event that had happened some time before Jesus' Ascension (almost as if he's convinced it happened but can't quite place it). Jesus' speech, though, is not tentative. John closes by affirming that the disciples who remained loyal to Jesus would receive the Spirit.**

### **A reading from the holy Gospel according to John**

On the last and greatest day of the feast,  
Jesus stood up and exclaimed,

"Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink.

(raise volume a bit) (very short pause)

As Scripture says:

*Rivers of living water will flow from within him  
who believes in me."*

(change tone – a quote)

(very short pause)

He said this in reference to the Spirit  
that those who came to believe in him were to receive.

(almost parenthetical)

“ (very short pause)

There was,

of course,

no Spirit yet,

because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

(parenthetical)

(statement of fact)

### **The Gospel of the Lord.**