



DAY OF PENTECOST

FIRST READING: Acts 2:1-21

OR GENESIS 11:1-9, following

A reading from Acts.

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.

⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.

⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”

⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?

⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs— in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”

¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

¹³But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say.

¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.

¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

FIRST READING (Acts) *Mesopotamia = mes-oh-poh-TAY-mee-uh* *Cappadocia = kap-uh-DOH-shee-uh*
Phrygia = FRIJ-yuh *Pamphylia = pam-FIL-yuh* *Cyrene = sy-REE-nuh*

This reading provides two distinct and significant challenges for the reader. The most apparent is the list of less than familiar cities and regions. The other is the overwhelming noise that fills the entire house. The story demands more energy and volume than most. It will also be helped if the reader is so utterly confident in the pronunciations that the geographic sites can tumble out in something of an ecstatic rush. Also, note that the word “prophesy” in verse 17 is pronounced *PROF-uh-sigh*. The truly well prepared reader will have practiced long and hard.

¹⁷In the last days it will be, God declares,
 that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
 and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
 and your young men shall see visions,
 and your old men shall dream dreams.
¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
 in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
 and they shall prophesy.
¹⁹And I will show portents in the heaven above
 and signs on the earth below,
 blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness
 and the moon to blood,
 before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' ”

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

OR: Genesis 11:1-9

A reading from Genesis.

¹Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.
²And as they migrated from the east,
 they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.
³And they said to one another,
 “Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.”
 And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar.
⁴Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city,
 and a tower with its top in the heavens,
 and let us make a name for ourselves;
 otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.”
⁵The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built.
⁶And the LORD said,
 “Look, they are one people, and they have all one language;
 and this is only the beginning of what they will do;
 nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.
⁷Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there,
 so that they will not understand one another's speech.” ▶

FIRST READING (Genesis) *Shinar = SHY-nar Babel = BAY-bul*

This rich and dramatic tale merits an enthusiastic reading. It tells of a grand scheme and cosmic conflict. Do not hurry the telling of it. Paint the story with broad strokes helping the hearer to see the story as well as to hear it. Bring as much enthusiasm to the last verse as to the first.

⁸So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth,
and they left off building the city.
⁹Therefore it was called Babel,
because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth;
and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

PSALMODY: Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

SECOND READING: Romans 8:14-17

OR ACTS 2:1-21, following

A reading from Romans.

¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you have received a spirit of adoption.
When we cry, “Abba! Father!”
¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit
that we are children of God,
¹⁷and if children, then heirs,
heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—
if, in fact, we suffer with him
so that we may also be glorified with him.

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

OR: Acts 2:1-21

A reading from Acts.

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²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound
like the rush of a violent wind,
and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them,
and a tongue rested on each of them.

SECOND READING (Romans) *Abba = AH-buh*

Very short readings can end before they begin unless the reader brings a careful strategy to the proclaiming. The lesson is only three sentences long. The first is the topic sentence and a hopeful one. The second carries an important warning. The third is complex and demands careful attention to the commas and the dash if it is to be understood in one hearing.

SECOND READING (Acts)

See notes for the First Reading from Acts, above.

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¹⁸Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

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²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day.

²¹Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”

The word of the Lord. *or* Word of God, word of life.

GOSPEL: John 14:8-17 [25-27]

The holy gospel according to John.

⁸Philip said to Jesus,

“Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me?

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.

How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?

¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?

The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

¹²Very truly, I tell you,

the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

¹⁵“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

¹⁶And I will ask the Father,

and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

[²⁵“I have said these things to you while I am still with you.

²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”]

The gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL

This cutting from John is a classic example of the need for pastoral practice even with texts we have read countless times. Map the text carefully. See whether or not significant pauses (in addition to those between paragraphs) might be helpful between verses 11 and 12, 15 and 16, 26 and 27. Bring the depth of love and concern to this voice of Jesus that Philip (and all disciples of Jesus) long to hear.