

# PENTECOST SUNDAY: DAY

## LECTONARY #63

### READING I Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

#### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled,

they were all in one place together.

And suddenly there came from the sky

a noise like a strong driving wind,

and it filled the entire house in which they were.

Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,

which parted and came to rest on each one of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit

and began to speak in different tongues,

as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven

staying in Jerusalem.

At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd,

but they were confused

because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

They were astounded, and in amazement they asked,

“Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans?

Then how does each of us hear them in his native language?

We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites,

inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia,

Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, »

The proclamation has auditory and visual descriptors. Present them as if you were there reporting them. Nature is responding to God's intervention in history.

Pause for the scene change. The narrative moves from the inside of the house to the outside.

Use an upward inflection for each question, pausing after each one.

Parthians = PAHR-thee-uhnz  
Medes = meeds

Elamites = EE-luh-mits

Mesopotamia = mes-uh-poh-TAY-mee-uh

Judea = joo-DEE-uh or joo-DAY-uh

Cappadocia = kap-uh-DOH-shuh

or kap-uh-DOH-shue-uh

Pontus = PON-tuhs

Phrygia = FRI-ee-uh

Pamphylia = pam-FIL-ee-uh

There are options for today's readings. Contact your parish staff to learn which readings will be used.

### READING I

Pentecost has rightly been called the birthday of the Church. The interaction between the resurrected Lord and the small band of early disciples was the focus of the Easter season. With Jesus' ascension into heaven, the small band was deprived of his physical presence, but assured that they would receive the gift of his Spirit, a gift that

would inaugurate the next phase in salvation history. It is the birth of that next phase and the role of the Spirit that Pentecost commemorates.

With Jesus' ascension, and with the choice of Matthias to bring the number back up to twelve, all is ready for the birth of the Church. This first reading sets the context by mentioning that "the time for Pentecost was fulfilled." Although Pentecost began as an agricultural festival fifty days after Passover, Jews of Luke's time understood it as a covenant renewal ceremony celebrating the giving of Torah at Sinai. (appearance) in Exodus was marked by thunder, lightning/fire, clouds, a loud voice

Libya = LIB-ee-uh  
Cyrene = si-REEN or si-REE-nee  
Cretans = KREE-tuhns

Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34 (30)

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

or  
R. Alleluia.

Bless the Lord, O my soul!  
O Lord, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O Lord!  
The earth is full of your creatures.  
If you take away their breath, they perish  
and return to their dust.  
Pleasing to him be my theme;  
I will be glad in the Lord.  
When you send forth your spirit,  
they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.  
May the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
may the Lord be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme;

For meditation and context:

Corinthians = kohr-IN-thee-uhnz

Paul's teaching uses metaphors to explain how the Spirit moves in the lives of believers. It is a timeless message that ministries come in many different forms.

Note the focus on community: the gifts given by the Spirit benefit the community.

The Church is blessed with diversity; we all have an important role to play.

(noise), and wind and smoke. God's message was embodied in the voice/noise and the fire. Thus, in this "new Sinai" event at Pentecost, the disciples experience a theophany (noise/wind and flame/fire) as they are filled with the Holy Spirit. The theophany is experienced by the crowd (an ingathering of Jews from all the nations speaking different languages) through the noise, but especially through the transformation of the disciples. The crowd does not need to see the flames, because they experience the Spirit-infused disciples and their message, each in his own language. Jesus'

READING II

1 Corinthians. Paul's letters often bring his theology to bear on the very real issues facing the communities he founded. In his letter to the community at Corinth, Paul identifies the Spirit as the principle of unity in the face of division caused by diversity.

Paul's relationship with the Christians in Corinth ranged from tenderness to rage, as he strove to support their dynamism

earlier promise of the Spirit is fulfilled as the disciples speak of "the mighty acts of God," and the Spirit gives birth to the Church. While also keeping them united to one another, to himself, and to the Church. Today's passage employs two strategies in the task. First, Paul associates the Spirit with the Christian vocation when he declares that proclaiming Jesus as Lord means that the Christian is in possession of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit not only makes that proclamation possible, but it is also the unifying origin of the spiritual gifts. Thus, the community benefits from diverse gifts, which is joined to the others in origin (the Spirit) and purpose ("for some benefit").

**A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians**  
**Brothers and sisters:**  
**No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.**  
**There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;**  
**there are different forms of service but the same Lord;**  
**there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.**  
**To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.**  
**As a body is one though it has many parts,**  
**and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body,**  
**so also Christ.**

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Or:

READING II Galatians 5:16-25

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Galatians

Brothers and sisters, live by the Spirit

and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh has desires against the Spirit,

and the Spirit against the flesh;

these are opposed to each other,

so that you may not do what you want.

But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Now the works of the flesh are obvious:

immorality, impurity, lust, idolatry,

sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy,

outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness,

disensions, factions, occasions of envy,

drinking bouts, orgies, and the like.

I warn you, as I warned you before,

that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, generosity,

faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law.

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh

with its passions and desires.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

Christians from Judea) who teach a different "truth" of the Christian faith. In action. His ultimate goal is to eliminate all options except the rejection of circumcision. In the final proof, from which today's reading is drawn, Paul encourages the Galatians to live in the Spirit. Since the agitators contrast Paul's "law-free Gospel" with the Mosaic Law, Paul turns the tables, stating that those who live the commandment of love as Christ lived it do in fact fulfill the Mosaic Law. To make his point, Paul contrasts two different realms—the realm of the Spirit) To counter the agitators' teachings, Paul's letter consists of a series of rhetorical-

Galatians = guh-LAY-shuhnzh

Paul's moral exhortation articulates the tension between vices and virtues. Change your tone between the two lists. Use a stern tone to represent the abhorrent nature of the vices, and let your countenance reflect the love that radiates from the virtues. Read the lists slowly, equal in pace, letting the assembly personally identify with items that hit home. Spread your gaze equally over the congregation, being careful not to rest on any one individual.

Read Paul's warning as fatherly advice. Paul is not threatening, just honest about the consequence of sin.

The advice in this reading is not a one-time examination of conscience. We are continually invited to "live in the Spirit" and be guided to holiness.

Second, Paul employs the image of the body with its many parts. Recalling the body of Christ with its many members, Paul notes that in Christian rituals, the Spirit is the source of unity: in one Spirit, all are baptized, in the Eucharist, all are "given to drink of one Spirit." Thus, in this short reading, Paul verifies the central role that the Spirit plays in the daily life of the Church. **Galatians.** Writing a circular letter to Christian communities in Galatia, Paul responds to a challenge to the message of his proclamation of the Good News by a group of outside agitators (likely Jewish

TO KEEP IN MIND

Sequences originated as extensions of the sung Alleluia before the proclamation of the Gospel, although they precede the Alleluia now. The Pentecost Sequence, also called the Golden Sequence, is an ancient liturgical hymn praising the Holy Spirit. It is the source of the hymn "Come, Holy Ghost."

SEQUENCE Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Come, Holy Spirit, come!  
And from your celestial home  
Shed a ray of light divine!  
Come, Father of the poor!  
Come, source of all our store!  
Come, within our bosoms shine.  
You, of comforters the best;  
You, the soul's most welcome guest;  
Sweet refreshment here below;  
In our labor, rest most sweet;  
Grateful coolness in the heat;  
Solace in the midst of woe.  
O most blessed Light divine,  
Shine within these hearts of yours,  
And our inmost being fill!

Where you are not, we have naught,  
Nothing good in deed or thought,  
Nothing free from taint of ill.  
Heal our wounds, our strength renew;  
On our dryness pour your dew;  
Wash the stains of guilt away;  
Bend the stubborn heart and will;  
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;  
Guide the steps that go astray.  
On the faithful, who adore  
And confess you, evermore  
In your sevenfold gift descend;  
Give them virtue's sure reward;  
Give them your salvation, Lord;  
Give them joys that never end. Amen.  
Alleluia.

GOSPEL John 20:19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Or:

GOSPEL

John 20. In contrast to Luke's account of Pentecost, John's Gospel places the event on the "evening of that first day of the week." A longer version of today's Gospel was read on the Second Sunday of Easter, where the focus was placed on the disciples' movement from unbelief to belief in the risen Lord. This shortened version, placed in the Pentecost context, has a different focus. Having already promised to send "another Advocate" (John 14:16), John's Gospel describes how the resurrected Lord returns to fulfill that promise in two phases.

Similar to Luke's account, where the disciples are gathered in one place, John's first phase describes how Jesus enters the closed and locked room where the disciples are, offers peace, shows the disciples his hands and side, and brings them to joy. In the second phase, again with some parallels to Luke, Jesus breathes on them, infuses them with the Holy Spirit, transforms them, and gives them a ministry that continues his own. While Luke has a different chronology, the process is similar in John: Jesus breathes on them (in Acts, the strong wind), infuses them with the Holy

and the realm of the flesh (carnal, to dwell in unredeemed humanity). Persons (body and soul) who live in the realm of the flesh produce the works of that realm, which lack freedom ("gratify the desire of the flesh. . . you may not do what you want"). In contrast, believers (body and soul) who are "guided by the Spirit" are free (no longer "under the law") and produce the fruits of the Spirit. In the end, Paul reminds the Galatians that these realms cannot co-exist and that those who belong to Christ Jesus also "follow the Spirit."

Read the appearance story as if for the first time. The narrator sets the scene. The disciples are locked in the room and "locked" in fear. Let your tone communicate the astonishment of Jesus' appearance. The narrator interjects the response of the disciples. Give a little more energy the second time Jesus offers peace; Jesus wants to share this peace with his disciples (and us).

GOSPEL John 15:26-27; 16:12-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to his disciples:

“When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.

He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.

Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.”

In your Bible, read the verses that are missing from this reading. This reading is part of Jesus' final instruction to his disciples before his passion, warning them of their future trouble, yet assuring them of the Spirit's presence.

Jesus only tells them as much as they are able to handle at this point.

God holds nothing back from us. What generosity!

Spirit (the tongues of flame), transforms them (they speak in other languages), and gives them a ministry (they proclaim God's works). Just as Jesus shared in God's work of forgiveness of sin and laying bare all sinfulness, he identifies this as a fundamental part of his disciples' ministry. As Jesus was sent by the Father, so now they are sent. Their ministry is possible because of the Spirit.

John 15. The lengthy Farewell Discourse (John 14-17) in John's Gospel is Jesus' final will and testament. Among its unique contributions is Jesus' promise to

send another Advocate (John 14:16). It is Jesus' development of that promise that is found in this Gospel reading. The Gospel's mention of another Advocate ties the role intimately to Jesus himself, the first Advocate. Lost from view in today's Gospel is the fact that Jesus is not the ultimate source of truth, but rather speaks what he hears. S.L.

offers several insights into the Advocate/whom he will send from the Father, and strengthen them in the face of such hostility, Jesus speaks of the coming Advocate

whom he will guide them. This brief passage offers several insights into the Advocate/