

The Congregation at Prayer

# Daily Devotions

2026

A Daily Devotional

St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



**First Week of Pre-Lent**

February 1-February 8, 2026

## **Start Every Day**

*"In the Name of the Father, and + of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen"*

*recite* **APOSTLE'S CREED**

VERSE: Psalm 51:1-2 ***"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my***

***transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!”***

*Read/Chant Psalm 15*

**CATECHISM—Lord’s Prayer—Second Petition**

Thy kingdom come.

***What does this mean?*** The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.

***How is does God’s kingdom come?*** God’s kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

**Sunday, February 1**

- Read **2 Timothy 4:1-18**
- *Secondary reading:* **Zechariah 11:1-17**

GREGORY OF NYSSA: (2 Timothy 3:16) The Scripture is “given by inspiration of God,” as the apostle says. The Scripture is of the Holy Spirit, and its intention is the profit of men. For “every Scripture,” he says, “is given by inspiration of God and is profitable. “The profit is varied and multiform, as the apostle says—“for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” Such a gift as this, however, is not within any man’s reach to lay hold of. Rather, the divine intention lies hidden under the body of the Scripture, as it were under a veil,



- 4 Lord, when we fall or go astray,  
Absolve and lift us up, we pray;  
And through the Sacrament increase  
Our faith till we depart in peace.

*Text: Ludwig Helmbold, 1532–98; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.  
Text: Public domain*

some legislative enactment or some historical narrative being cast over the truths that are contemplated by the mind. AGAINST EUNOMIUS 3.7.1.<sup>1</sup>

### **Monday, February 2**

- Read **Titus 1:1-2:6**
- *Secondary Reading: Zechariah 12:1-13:9*

AUGUSTINE: (Titus 1:12) If you were to hear, even from one who was profane, the prayer of the priest couched in words suitable to the mysteries of the gospel, can you possibly say to him, “Your prayer is not true,” though he himself may be not only a false priest but not a priest at all? The apostle Paul said that certain testimony of a Cretan prophet (he knew not which) was true, though he was not reckoned among the prophets of God.... If, therefore, the apostle himself bore witness to the testimony of some obscure prophet of a foreign race because he found it to be true, why do not we, when we find in any one what belongs to Christ and is true even though the man with whom it may be found is deceitful and perverse? Why do we not in such a case make a distinction between the fault which is found in the man and the truth which he

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<sup>1</sup> Gorday, Peter, ed. 2000. [\*Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon\*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

has not of his own but of God? The Letters of Petilian the Donatist 2.30.69.<sup>2</sup>

### **Tuesday, February 3**

- Read **Titus 2:7-3:15**
- *Secondary Reading: Zechariah 14:1-21*

AMBROSE: (Titus 3:5) Who is the one who is born of the Spirit and is made Spirit? It is one who is renewed in the Spirit of his mind. It is one who is regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit. We receive the hope of eternal life through the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. And elsewhere the apostle Peter says: "You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." For who is he that is baptized with the Holy Spirit but he who is born again through water and the Holy Spirit? Therefore the Lord said of the Holy Spirit, "Truly, truly, I say to you, except a man be born again by water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>29</sup> And therefore he declared that we are born of him into the kingdom of God by being born again by water and the Spirit. Of the Holy Spirit 3.10.64.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gorday, Peter, ed. 2000. [\*Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon\*](#).

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>3</sup> Gorday, Peter, ed. 2000. [\*Colossians, 1–2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon\*](#).

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### **Luther's Evening Prayer**

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

### **865 Lord, Help Us Ever to Retain**

- 1 Lord, help us ever to retain  
The Catechism's doctrine plain  
As Luther taught the Word of truth  
In simple style to tender youth.
- 2 Help us Your holy Law to learn,  
To mourn our sin and from it turn  
In faith to You and to Your Son  
And Holy Spirit, Three in One.
- 3 Hear us, dear Father, when we pray  
For needed help from day to day  
That as Your children we may live,  
Whom You baptized and so received.

resurrection, he began the signs that he would show only to those who were pursuing the goal of immortal life.... Therefore, let us love with our whole mind, dearly beloved, the marriage of Christ and the church, which was prefigured then in one city and is now celebrated over the whole earth. HOMILIES ON THE GOSPELS 1.14.<sup>7</sup>

### **Sunday, February 8**

- Read **John 2:13-25**
- *Second Reading:* **Job 5:1-27**

### **End Every Day**

#### ***Pray the Collect for Fourth Sunday after Epiphany***

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

#### **Personal Prayers**

*pray* **LORD'S PRAYER**

#### **Luther's Morning Prayer**

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<sup>7</sup> Elowsky, Joel C., ed. 2006. [\*John 1–10\*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

### **Wednesday, February 4**

- Read **John 1:1-18**
- *Secondary Reading:* **Job 1:1-22**

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA: (John 1:1) It is not possible to take “beginning” (*archē*) of the Only Begotten as being understood in any way dealing with time, seeing that the Son is before all time and has his being before the ages, and, what is even more, that the divine nature shuns such a boundary.... For no beginning will ever be conceived of by itself that does not look to its own end, since beginning is called this in reference to an end, and end again in reference to a beginning. But the beginning we are pointing to in this instance is that relating to time and dimension. And so, since the Son is older than the ages themselves, he will be free of any generation in time, and he always was in the Father as in a source. The Father then being considered as the Source, the Logos was in him being his wisdom, power, express image, radiance and likeness. If there was no time when the Father was without Logos, wisdom, image, radiance and likeness, it is necessary to confess also that the Son, who is all these to the eternal Father, is eternal. COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 1:1.<sup>4</sup>

### **Thursday, February 5**

- Read **John 1:19-34**

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<sup>4</sup> Elowsky, Joel C., ed. 2006. [\*John 1–10\*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- *Secondary Reading: Job 2:1-3:10*

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA: (John 1:29) No longer does John need to “prepare the way,” since the one for whom the preparation was being made is right there before his eyes.... But now he who of old was dimly pictured, the very Lamb, the spotless Sacrifice, is led to the slaughter for all, that he might drive away the sin of the world, that he might overturn the destroyer of the earth, that dying for all he might annihilate death, that he might undo the curse that is upon us.... For one Lamb died for all, saving the whole flock on earth to God the Father, one for all, that he might subject all to God.

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 2.1.<sup>5</sup>

### **Friday, February 6**

- Read **John 1:35-51**
- *Secondary Reading: Job 3:11-26*

CHRYSOSTOM: (John 1:39-41) Andrew, after having stayed with Jesus and after having learned what he did, did not keep the treasure to himself but hurries and races to his brother in order to let him know the good things Jesus has shared with him. But why hasn't John mentioned what they talked about? How do we know this is why they “stayed with him”?... Observe what Andrew says to his brother, “We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.” You see how, in a

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<sup>5</sup> Elowsky, Joel C., ed. 2006. [John 1–10](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

short time, he demonstrates not only the persuasiveness of the wise teacher but also his own longing that he had from the beginning. For this word, “we have found,” is the expression of a soul that longs for his presence, looking for his coming from above, and is so ecstatic when what he is looking for happens that he hurries to tell others the good news. This is what brotherly affection, natural friendship, is all about when someone is eager to extend a hand to another when it comes to spiritual matters. Also see how he adds the article, for he does not say “Messiah” but “the Messiah.” They were expecting the Christ who would have nothing in common with the others.

HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 19.1.<sup>6</sup>

### **Saturday, February 7**

- Read **John 2:1-12**
- *Secondary Reading: Job 4:1-21*

BEDE: (John 2:12) By this sign he made manifest that he was the King of glory, and so the church's bridegroom. He came to the marriage as a common human being, but as Lord of heaven and earth he could convert the elements as he wished. How beautifully appropriate it is that when he began the signs that he would show to mortals while he was still mortal he turned water into wine. [But] when he had become immortal through his

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<sup>6</sup> Elowsky, Joel C., ed. 2006. [John 1–10](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.