

The Congregation at Prayer

Daily Devotions

2026

A Daily Devotional

St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



Second Week after Epiphany

January 11-January 18, 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: 1 Peter 3:18 ***"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit."***

Read/Chant **Psalm 40:1-11**

CATECHISM—Lord's Prayer—The Introduction

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean? With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children as their dear father.

Sunday, January 18

- Read **Romans 8:18-39**
- *Secondary reading:* **Ezek. 40:1-4, 43:1-12**

CAESARIUS OF ARLES: (Romans 8:35) Good Christians are not separated from Christ even by torture. Tepid and careless ones however, are sometimes separated from him by idle tales; if they suffer even a slight loss they are immediately scandalized, dare to murmur against God and return to their impious, detestable omens. SERMON 54.2.¹

Monday, January 19

- Read **Romans 9:1-18**
- *Secondary Reading:* **Ezekiel 44:1-29**

CHRYSOSTOM: (Romans 9:3) What are you saying, Paul? Do you really want to be cut off from Christ,

¹ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.



- 5 There is nothing worth comparing
 To this lifelong comfort sure!
Open-eyed my grave is staring:
 Even there I'll sleep secure.
Though my flesh awaits its raising,
Still my soul continues praising:
 I am baptized into Christ;
 I'm a child of paradise!

Text: Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756; tr. Robert E. Voelker, 1957
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your beloved one, from whom neither heaven nor hell, nor things visible nor invisible, nor another world as great would separate you? Do you want to be cursed by him? What has happened? Have you changed, have you thrown over your previous love? No, Paul replies, do not worry! On the contrary, I have made my love for him more intense still. HOMILIES ON ROMANS 16.²

Tuesday, January 20

- Read **Romans 9:19-33**
- *Secondary Reading: Ezekiel 47:1-23*

AUGUSTINE: (Romans 9:19) Having given his conclusion [in the last verse] Paul plays devil's advocate by asking a rhetorical question.... He responds to this question in a sensible way so that we might understand that the basic rewards of faith and of unbelief are made plain only to spiritual people and not to those who live according to the earthly man. Likewise with the way God in his foreknowledge elects those who will believe and condemns unbelievers. He neither elects the ones because of their works nor condemns the others because of theirs, but he grants to the faith of the ones the ability to do good works and hardens the unbelief of the others by deserting them, so that they do evil. This understanding, as I have said, is given only to

² Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

spiritual people and is very different from the wisdom of the flesh. Thus Paul counters his inquirer so that he may understand that he first must put away the man of clay in order to be worthy to investigate these things by the Spirit. AUGUSTINE ON ROMANS 62.³

Wednesday, January 21

- Read **Romans 10:1-21**
- *Secondary Reading: Joel 1:1-20*

AMBROSIASER: (Romans 10:10) What Paul previously spoke about he now makes clear. The rule of faith is to believe that Jesus is Lord and not to be ashamed to confess that God raised him from the dead and has taken him up to heaven with his body, whence he will come again. COMMENTARY ON PAUL'S EPISTLES.⁴

Thursday, January 22

- Read **Romans 11:1-24**
- *Secondary Reading: Joel 2:1-17*

AMBROSIASER: (Romans 11:19) A believing Gentile says that he can rejoice that the Jews did not believe, saying that their condemnation made room for the Gentiles. But the Jews were not

³ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁴ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

594 God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It

- 1 God's own child, I gladly say it:
I am baptized into Christ!
He, because I could not pay it,
Gave my full redemption price.
Do I need earth's treasures many?
I have one worth more than any
That brought me salvation free
Lasting to eternity!
- 2 Sin, disturb my soul no longer:
I am baptized into Christ!
I have comfort even stronger:
Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.
Should a guilty conscience seize me
Since my Baptism did release me
In a dear forgiving flood,
Sprinkling me with Jesus' blood?
- 3 Satan, hear this proclamation:
I am baptized into Christ!
Drop your ugly accusation,
I am not so soon enticed.
Now that to the font I've traveled,
All your might has come unraveled,
And, against your tyranny,
God, my Lord, unites with me!
- 4 Death, you cannot end my gladness:
I am baptized into Christ!
When I die, I leave all sadness
To inherit paradise!
Though I lie in dust and ashes
Faith's assurance brightly flashes:
Baptism has the strength divine
To make life immortal mine.

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for Second Sunday after Epiphany*

Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of Your people and grant us Your peace through all our days; 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

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.

condemned by God in order to let the Gentiles in. They condemned themselves by rejecting God's gift, and by doing that they gave the Gentiles an opportunity to be saved. Paul wants to stop this boasting, so that we might rejoice in our salvation rather than insult the weak. For the man who insults a sinner is easily deceived. COMMENTARY ON PAUL'S EPISTLES.⁵

Friday, January 23

- Read **Romans 11:25-12:13**
- *Secondary Reading:* **Joel 2:18-32**

GREGORY OF NYSSA: (Romans 12:1) How can the person who is conformed to this age, who is not transformed in the newness of his mind and who does not walk in the newness of this life but instead follows the life of the old man, obey Paul, who commanded you to present your body as a sacrifice living, holy and pleasing to God? How can you be a priest for God, having been anointed for this very purpose of offering a gift to God, not a gift that is completely alien or fraudulent because it consists of what is external to you but a gift which is truly yours because it consists of what is internal to you, which is the man inside you helping you to be perfect and blameless according to the word of the Lamb, free from all stain and dishonor? How will you place these offerings before God if you do

⁵ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

not listen to the law which forbids an unholy man to be a priest? ON VIRGINITY 23.⁶

Saturday, January 24

- Read **Romans 12:14-13:14**
- *Secondary Reading: Joel 3:1-21*

AUGUSTINE: (Roman 13:1) Most rightly, Paul warns against anyone who is puffed up with pride by the fact that he has been called by his Lord into freedom and become a Christian, and therefore thinks that he does not have to keep the status given to him in the course of this life or submit to the higher powers to whom the government of temporal things has been confided for a time. For because we are made of soul and body and as long as we are in this life we make use of temporal things as a means of living this life, it is fitting that, as far as this life is concerned, we be subject to the authorities, i.e., to the people who with some recognition administer human affairs. But as far as the spiritual side is concerned, in which we believe in God and are called into his kingdom, it is not right for us to be subject to any man who seeks to overturn in us the very thing which God has been pleased to grant us so that we might obtain eternal life.

⁶ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

So if anyone thinks that because he is a Christian he does not have to pay taxes or tribute nor show the proper respect to the authorities who take care of these things, he is in very great error. Likewise, if anyone thinks that he ought to submit to the point where he accepts that someone who is his superior in temporal affairs should have authority even over his faith, he falls into an even greater error. But the balance which the Lord himself prescribed is to be maintained: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's but unto God the things which are God's." For although we are called into that kingdom where there will be no power of this world, nevertheless, while we are on the way there and until we have reached that state where every principality and power will be destroyed, let us put up with our condition for the sake of human affairs, doing nothing falsely and in this very thing obeying God, who commands us to do it, rather than men. AUGUSTINE ON ROMANS 72.⁷

Sunday, January 25

- Read **Romans 14:1-23**
- *Second Reading: Zechariah 1:1-21*

⁷ Bray, Gerald, ed. 1998. [*Romans \(Revised\)*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.