

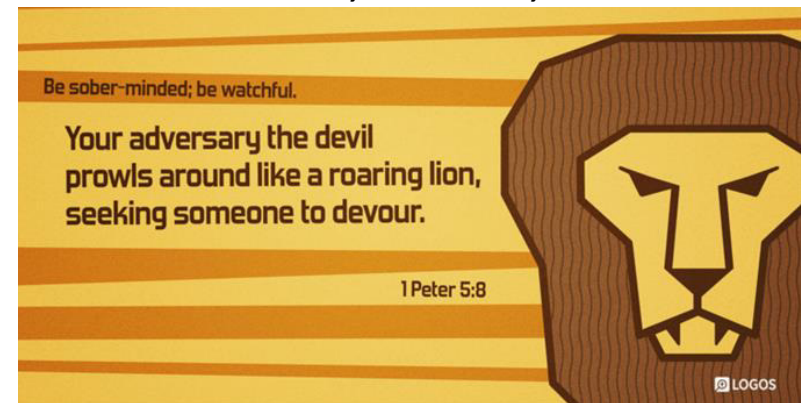
The Congregation at Prayer

Daily Devotions

2026

A Daily Devotional

St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



Seventh Week of Easter

May 17-May 24, 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 5:7-8 ***"Cast all your anxieties on God, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."***

Read/Chant **Psalm 68:1-10**

CATECHISM—*What is the Office of the Keys?*

The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.

Where is this written?

This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” (John 20:22-23)

Sunday, May 17

- Read **Acts 1:1-11**
- *Secondary reading:* **Numbers 14:1-25**

CHRYSOSTOM: (Acts 1:8) And they did become witnesses by their miracles. This is so, for the grace of the Spirit is ineffable, and innumerable are his gifts. Moreover, this took place that you might learn that the gifts and the power of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are one. What appears to be proper to the Father also belongs in reality to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. “How is it, then,” you will say, “that no one comes to the Son ‘unless the Father draw him’?” But this is shown to be true of the Son also, for he said, “I am the way; no one comes to the Father but through me.”¹⁹ And notice that the same thing is true of the Spirit also. For “No one can say, ‘Jesus Christ is Lord,’ except in the Holy Spirit.” And again, we are told that apostles have been given to the church, at one time by the Father, at another by the Son, and at

another by the Holy Spirit, so we see that the varieties of gifts belong to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.²¹ HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 86.¹

Monday, May 18

- Read **Acts 1:12-26**
- *Secondary Reading:* **Numbers 14:26-45**

AUGUSTINE: (Acts 1:26) What lesson then, my brothers, did our Lord Jesus Christ wish to impress on his church, when it pleased him to have one castaway among the twelve, but this, that we should bear with the wicked and refrain from dividing the body of Christ?... Such was this man Judas, and yet he went in and out with the eleven holy disciples. With them he came even to the table of the Lord: he was permitted to converse with them, but he could not contaminate them. Both Peter and Judas partook of one bread, and yet what communion had the believer with the infidel? Peter's partaking was to life, but that of Judas to death. For that good bread was just like the sweet savor. For as the sweet savor, so also does the good bread give life to the good and bring death to the wicked. "For whoever eats unworthily eats and drinks judgment against himself": "judgment against himself," not against you. If, then, it is judgment against him, not against you, bear as one

¹ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

that is good with him that is evil, that you may attain the rewards of the good and not be hurled into the punishment of the wicked. TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 50.10.²

Tuesday, May 19

- Read **Acts 2:1-13**
- *Secondary Reading: Numbers 16:1-22*

EPHREM THE SYRIAN: (Acts 2:1)

When the blessed apostles
Were gathered together
The place shook
And the scent of Paradise,
Having recognized its home,
Poured forth its perfumes,
Delighting the heralds by whom
The guests are instructed
And come to his banquet;
Eagerly he awaits their arrival
For he is the lover of mankind. HYMNS ON

PARADISE 11.14.

Wednesday, May 20

- Read **Acts 2:14-21**
- *Secondary Reading: Numbers 16:23-40*

BEDE: (Acts 2:19) [The blood is] of the Lord's side; the fire of the Holy Spirit; the vapor of compunction and tears, because just as smoke is produced from fire, so vapor is produced from the

² Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

D 4 Glory to God the Father,
The unbegotten One,
All honor be to Jesus,
His sole-begotten Son,
And to the Holy Spirit—
The perfect Trinity.
Let all the worlds give answer:
Amen! So let it be.

Text: attr. Columba, 521–597; tr. Duncan MacGregor, 1854–1923, alt.
Text: Public domain

*Prayer
Requests*



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.

539 Christ Is the World's Redeemer

- 1 Christ is the world's Redeemer,
The lover of the pure,
The font of heav'nly wisdom,
Our trust and hope secure,
The armor of His soldiers,
The Lord of earth and sky,
Our health while we are living,
Our life when we shall die.
- 2 Christ has our host surrounded
With clouds of martyrs bright,
Who wave their palms in triumph
And fire us for the fight.
Then Christ the cross ascended
To save a world undone
And, suff'ring for the sinful,
Our full redemption won.
- 3 Down through the realm of darkness
He strode in victory,
And at the hour appointed
He rose triumphantly.
And now, to heav'n ascended,
He sits upon the throne
Whence He had ne'er departed,
His Father's and His own.

ardor of the Holy Spirit. And as for blood flowing in a vigorous stream from [the Lord's] dead flesh, because this is contrary to the nature of our bodies it remains [for us] to believe that this was done for a sign. A sign of what, to be sure, if not of our salvation and the life that is born from his death? It is also possible to understand the fire as the enlightening of the faithful, and the vapor of smoke as the blindness of the Jews who did not believe. Similarly when about to give the law the Lord descended in fire and smoke²⁰ because through the brilliance of his manifestation he enlightened the humble, and through the murky smoke of error he dimmed the eyes of the proud. COMMENTARY ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2.19.³

Thursday, May 21

- Read **Acts 2:22-36**
- *Secondary Reading:* **Num. 16:41-17:13**

AUGUSTINE: (Acts 2:24) And if one is hard put to explain how the pangs of hell were loosed by him—for he did not stay in them as in bondage and hence did not loose them as if they were chains that bound him—it is easy to understand that they might have been loosed like the snares of hunters, not because they held him, but so that they might not hold him. That is how we can believe that he loosed the pangs that did not bind him but did bind

³ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

others whom he knew he was to set free. LETTER 164.⁴

Friday, May 22

- Read **Acts 2:37-41**
- *Secondary Reading: Numbers 20:1-21*

BEDE: (Acts 2:41) On the fiftieth day of Passover, when the law was given, Moses indeed ordered the festival of firstfruits to be introduced. Now, however, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, it is not sheaves of grain but the firstfruits of souls that are consecrated to the Lord. COMMENTARY ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2.41.⁵

Saturday, May 23

- Read **Acts 2:42-47**
- *Secondary Reading: Numbers 20:22-21:9*

AUGUSTINE: (Acts 2:47) If, as they drew near to God, those many souls became, in the power of love, but one soul and these many hearts but one heart, what must the very source of love effect between the Father and the Son? Is not the Trinity for even greater reasons, but one God?... If the love of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who is given to us, is able to make of many souls but one soul and of many hearts but one heart, how much

⁴ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁵ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

more are the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit but one God, one Light, one Principle? TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 39.5.⁶

Sunday, May 24

- Read **Genesis 11:1-9**
- *Second Reading: Numbers 21:10-35*

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for 7th Sunday of Easter*

O King of glory, Lord of hosts, uplifted in triumph far above all heavens, leave us not without consolation but send us the Spirit of truth whom You promised from the Father; for You live and reign with Him 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.

⁶ Martin, Francis, and Evan Smith, eds. 2006. [Acts](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.