

Sunday, Jan 18, 2026

Faith is a daily commitment

The Gospel of John tells us that the Spirit came down and remained on Jesus. The wording is no accident. At one point or another, each of us likely has had a powerful spiritual experience, a genuine “moment of connection” with the divine. Without diminishing the beauty and significance of such experiences, a single “peak experience” does not a spiritual life make. It is the day-in, day-out commitment to practice one’s faith that will create a deeply rooted spirituality. The Holy Spirit not only descended on Jesus, it remained with him. The results were evident in Jesus’ life, and can be in ours as well.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:1-3; John 1:29-34 (64). “*On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.*”

Monday, Jan 19, 2026

That all may be one

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity began in 1908. The dates of the week were proposed by Father Paul Wattson, S.A., cofounder of the Graymoor Franciscan Friars. Popes Pius X blessed the concept and Benedict XV encouraged its observance. Protestant leaders in the mid-1920s also proposed an annual octave of prayer for unity. In 1948, with the founding of the World Council of Churches, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity became increasingly recognized by different churches throughout the world. Take a moment today to pray that while acknowledging our differences, Christians of various backgrounds and traditions may indeed all be one in Christ.

1 Samuel 15:16-23; Mark 2:18-22 (311). “*New wine is poured into fresh wineskins.*”

Tuesday, Jan 20, 2026

Blissful thinking

“We all want to live happily,” Saint Augustine wrote. “How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord?” For the answer, the Catechism of the Catholic Church advises: Look to the Beatitudes—a word that means “ultimate happiness” or “bliss”—in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus explains how to be comforted, shown mercy, filled, even to inherit the Earth and see God. Happiness doesn’t come from money or power or fame, as tempting as they might be, but from humility, purity of heart, faithfulness—all the virtues Jesus extols. When happiness eludes you, it can be recovered by recalling the words of Saint Thomas Aquinas: “God alone satisfies.”

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Mark 2:23-28 (312). “*The Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.*”

Wednesday, Jan 21, 2026

Nothing is as simple as black and white

Determining good and evil is rarely a simple affair. Saint Agnes refused to obey a Roman official and marry his son, so she was considered a defiant citizen, tortured and beheaded. Jesus healed on the Sabbath and so was considered a lawbreaker, tortured and hanged. Every age has its citizens and leaders who see things in black and white and stand ready to accuse any who would dare to admit to shades of gray when it comes to right and wrong. Be

careful not to join their ranks. The world is filled with mystery, subtlety, and divine truths that can’t be prepackaged in one-size-fits-all boxes.

MEMORIAL OF AGNES, MARTYR

1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Mark 3:1-6 (313). “*They watched Jesus closely to see if he would cure him on the sabbath so that they might accuse him.*”

Thursday, Jan 22, 2026

Cling to Christ

While Christian unity comes to our attention each January, in the daily “culture wars” what divides people (including Christian from Christian) seems always more prominent. In the healthcare debate, for example, securing the noble goal of healthcare for all, including the poor and undocumented, sparks controversy and even belligerence. What of the borderless kingship of Christ? Christ’s unconditional compassion is real only insofar as it is acted in *our* flesh. Unity among Christians will elude us as long as any of us clings to anyone or anything other than Christ.

1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Mark 3:7-12 (314). “*Jonathan then spoke well of David to his father Saul, saying to him: ‘Let not your majesty sin against his servant David.’*”

Friday, Jan 23, 2026

On call every day

To what will you be called this day? Will it be to reconciliation and right relationship with a friend or coworker? To lead the way on a project using your gifts and a bit of inspiration from the Spirit? To lay aside your pride to help another person? To make someone smile? You may not see it coming, and you might not even realize it when it is happening, but throughout this day, indeed every day, you are called by God to bring about the gospel of Christ Jesus—to “do small things with great love,” in the words of Mother Teresa. Listen, and be ready!

1 Samuel 24:3-21; Mark 3:13-19 (315). “*Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted.*”

Saturday, Jan 24, 2026

Here’s a crazy idea: Be kind and gentle

Many of Jesus’ relatives thought Jesus was out of his mind because of all the things he was saying and doing. Sixteen centuries later people thought Saints Francis de Sales and Jane Frances de Chantal were nuts for starting a religious order of sick and broken-down women who could not follow the more austere rules of religious life at the time. Yet together, like Mary at the Visitation, these women practiced “gentleness with a valiant spirit.” The Order of the Visitation has as its motto “Live Jesus,” which serves as a reminder to all of us to do the same.

MEMORIAL OF FRANCIS DE SALES, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27; Mark 3:20-21 (316). “*They set out to seize him, for they said, ‘He is out of his mind.’*”

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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