

DAILY PRAYER MEDITATIONS
February 23-28, 2026

Monday, February 23, 2026 (by Marilyn Culler)

Jesus Experienced Suffering

Hebrews 2:18 – “He’s able to help those who are being tempted, since he himself experienced suffering when he was tempted.”

PONDER: Jesus was tested, tempted, beaten, made to suffer. I can’t imagine the mental, spiritual or physical pain he endured. His suffering was, is and shall be the suffering endured by those who seek to love through times of pain, suffering and the work of evildoers. Times aren’t getting any easier. Guided by faith, hope and love, we too can endure.

PRAY: God, You are always with me. Thank You for the example of Jesus. Bless and sustain all who suffer at the hands of evildoers. Amen.

ACTION: Are you suffering? Do you see suffering around you? How can you ease some suffering around you? Perhaps a bird in need of food. A person in a hurry at the grocery store. Step in. Step out of the way. Offer a prayer. Be gentle with yourself.

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 (by Ashlee Vitz)

The God Who Covers Our Shame

Genesis 3:21 – “And the Lord God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife and clothed them.”

PONDER: After naming the consequences of their choices, God makes garments for Adam and Eve and clothes them. It’s such a tender, domestic image—God sewing. Even as they leave the garden, they do not leave God’s care. Your failures and wounds do not strip you of dignity in God’s eyes; God keeps working to cover your shame, to wrap you in something new. Clothing in Scripture often symbolizes identity. In Christ, we are given new clothes: beloved, chosen, free.

PRAY: Gentle God, when I feel exposed, embarrassed, or unworthy, cover me again in your mercy. Help me wear the clothes of belovedness you’ve made for me, not the rags of shame. Amen.

ACTION: When you get dressed today, imagine God gently wrapping you in love. If it helps, say quietly, “I am clothed in Christ.”

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 (by Marilyn Culler)

God Seeks, and Finds

Matthew 18:12-13 – “What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray.”

PONDER: This parable has been called “the parable of the lost sheep.” Look again: the one sheep isn’t lost – it has “gone astray.” There’s a difference. “Lost” infers unable to be found, destroyed, gone for good. “Astray” infers a deviation from an intended path. One can go astray, and end up lost. When someone goes astray, like the one sheep, God desires reunion with community for that person. It’s up to each of us to seek reunion with those who go astray, to bring them back into community so they can be cared for and watched over. Once they are lost, they are in God’s hands.

PRAY: Saving God, keep me from going astray, and if I do get off the path, send someone to find me and bring me back into Your arms. Amen.

ACTION: Have you ever been driving someplace and felt “lost?” What did it feel like when you finally knew where you were again? Why did it happen? Focus? Lack of preparation? Distractions? A poor roadmap? Trusting in God’s guidance, know that you are never truly lost.

Thursday, February 26, 2026 (by Marilyn Culler)

Help Forevermore

Psalm 121:7-8 – “The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.”

PONDER: The comforting words of the psalms in uncertain times reminds us that God is with us always. How is God keeping you in his care today? Yesterday? Tomorrow?

PRAY: God of life, thank You for Your watchful eye as I make my way through my days. Amen.

ACTION: Write down a list of gratitudes for all the ways God is “keeping” you.

Friday, February 27, 2026 (by Ashlée Vitz)

When You Feel Stuck in the Middle

Philippians 1:6 – “I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

PONDER: Lent can feel like the “in-between”—we’re not who we were, but not yet who we long to be. Paul’s confidence is this: “The one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion.” The pressure is not on you to engineer your own transformation. God is the One who started this work in you, and God is not a quitter. Even when you feel stalled, God is still shaping you in ways you may not see yet.

PRAY: Persistent God, when I feel stuck, remind me that you are still working in me. Help me trust your timing, your patience, and your commitment to my healing. Amen.

ACTION: Write down one area where you feel “unfinished.” Beneath it, write this verse as a promise over that space.

Saturday, February 28, 2026 (by Ashlée Vitz)

Walking Toward the Cross with Hope

Matthew 16:24–25 – “Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.””

PONDER: As Lent deepens, Jesus’ invitation becomes clearer: “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” This isn’t a call to accept abuse or injustice; it’s a call to live a life of self-giving love, trusting that losing our lives for his sake is how we truly find them. The cross is not the end of the story, but it is part of the path. We follow a Savior who walks into suffering in order to transform it from the inside.

PRAY: Crucified and risen Christ, show me what it means for me to take up my cross—not as a burden of shame, but as a path of love. Give me courage to follow you where you lead, trusting that resurrection waits on the other side. Amen.

ACTION: Ask yourself: Where might Jesus be inviting me to a costly love right now—setting a boundary, forgiving, serving, telling the truth? Take one small step in that direction.