



## **SECOND READING: Romans 6:12–23**

A reading from Romans.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup>No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup>For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

<sup>15</sup>What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, <sup>18</sup>and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

<sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 10:40–42**

<sup>40</sup>Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>41</sup>Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; <sup>42</sup>and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple — truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS:**



These readings are related to the Lectionary readings for this Sunday. We invite you to take time each day to read the assigned Bible passage.

Sunday	Matthew 10:40-42	Receiving and serving others
Monday	Luke 9:46-48	Welcoming the little ones
Tuesday	Matthew 25:31-40	Receiving Christ in others
Wednesday	Genesis 18:1-10	Abraham receives three visitors
Thursday	Romans 6:20-23	God gives eternal life
Friday	Hebrews 13:1-3,15-16	Show hospitality to strangers
Saturday	Psalms 68:4-10	God sets the lonely in families
Sunday	Matthew 11:16-19,25-30	Rest for the weary

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK:**

Sin pays off with death. But God's gift is eternal life given by Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Romans 6:23 (CEV)*

**SAY, PRAY AND BLESS:**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Lord, open our hearts to welcome you this day, and then to welcome others. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Upon this table food is spread, which we are blessed to share. We thank you, God, for daily bread and for your endless care. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May God, who has set you free from sin, lead you to do what is right and give you eternal life. Amen.

## CARING CONVERSATION:

Discuss in your household or small group:

- What is the best birthday or Christmas gift you have ever received?
- What is God's great gift to us? (read Romans 6:23). How is a gift different from a reward or a wage?
- Does this gift of God change the way you see and treat others? In what ways?

## DEVOTIONS:

Jesus said that anyone who gave one of his least important followers a cup of cool water - just because that person was his follower - would be rewarded (Matthew 10:42). Even small acts of kindness to our fellow Christians do not escape God's attention! For your home devotion times this week, set out a pitcher of water and a glass for each person. Take turns filling one another's glasses. Read Matthew 10:42 and say together this prayer: *"Lord Jesus, thank you for serving us. Please make us always ready to serve others, in big ways and in small ways. Amen."*

## SERVICE:

Extend a welcome to an individual or household from your congregation or another congregation to join you for a meal in your home (preferably people you don't know very well). Discuss how best to make them feel welcome and divide tasks among members of your household (e.g. preparing your home, serving drinks or snacks, entertaining, cleaning up). Remember that in serving your visitors you are serving Christ himself!

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS:

Psalm 89:1 says *"I will sing of your love forever."* Many people sing songs to ease their work or entertain guests. Make a list of your household's favorite Christian hymns and songs, and choose some new ones you would like to learn and share. Make up a household songbook for use at home and when traveling.