

AUGUST 30, 2020  
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*To follow Jesus is to be open to suffering.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 16:21-28	Take up your cross and follow
Monday	Jeremiah 15:15-21	Jeremiah is reassured
Tuesday	Romans 12:9-21	Rules for Christian living
Wednesday	Exodus 3:1-15	Moses at the burning bush
Thursday	Psalms 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b	God's faithfulness
Friday	2 Timothy 2:1-13	A good soldier of Christ Jesus
Saturday	Psalms 26:1-8	Prayer of an innocent person
Sunday	Matthew 18:15-20	Seeking reconciliation

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

**Matthew 16:24 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, help us to pick up our cross as a way to love others through Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

#### Mealtime Prayer:

Loving God, we thank you for the toil and efforts of others that we may have and enjoy this meal today. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May the cross of Christ give you good courage, hope, and love now and always.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*What Wondrous  
Love Is This*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Tell or think about a time when you or someone you know was in pain.
- Reflect on a time you felt someone's pain. What makes you take on someone else's pain?
- How does your faith in Christ help you when you are in pain?

### DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 16:21-28

In an era where we can do so many things to avoid or stop the pain, it can be surprising that suffering is still part of life. It is part of the Christian life because Jesus shows us that the way of the cross—an excruciatingly painful way to die—gets at the heart of the Christian faith. Peter didn't get it, even if he knew Jesus was the Messiah. Peter had to be humbled and corrected. And we do, too. God shows the depth of love from the cross of Christ. We are invited to join the great movement of divine love by caring, suffering, and celebrating Christ's victory over sin, death, and evil. Part of that celebration is our openness to the pain of the world, the pain of others for the sake of love. It is also the path that allows us to see the kingdom of God at work. Why do you think suffering is an important aspect of the Christian faith?

Pray: **Compassionate God, help us to see in suffering and death the very path of life and love through Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Most people have someone in their life who is ill, declining in health, or in hospice care. It can be painful to experience the suffering of a loved one. Those serving in the role of caregiver can often times be exhausted and in need of a break. Do you know of someone for whom a visit, meal, or call may give them the break they need?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In Jesus' time, the cross was about death. It is not easy to understand or talk about Jesus' death on the cross. The cross is a Christian symbol. It reminds us that Jesus is with us through easy and hard times. We see crosses in many places in our lives. As a follower of Jesus, notice the number of crosses you see in your home and in the community this week. Each time you see one, take a moment to pray: **Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross to save us.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)