

AUGUST 30, 2026
FOURTEENTH 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 complains
Tuesday	Romans 12:9-21	Rules for Christian living
Wednesday	Exodus 3:1-15	Moses at the burning bush
Thursday	1 Peter 4:12-19	Suffering as a Christian
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 and follow you to serve and love others even when it causes pain and suffering. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Loving God, we thank you for the toil and hard work of those who grow, gather, and prepare our food so that we may be fed. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the cross of Christ give you courage.



The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson. For a brief description, go to: <https://milestonesministry.org/history-of-the-four-keys/>.

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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:

- Who do you turn to for support when you are suffering or in pain?
- How does your faith in Christ help you when you are suffering?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 16:21-28.

In an era when we can do so many things to avoid or stop physical pain, it can be surprising that suffering is still very present. It is also an essential part of the Christian life because Jesus shows us that the way of his painful death on the cross gets at the heart of the Christian faith. Even if Peter knew Jesus was the Messiah, he still did not fully understand. Peter had to be humbled and corrected, and we do, too. God shows the depth of God's 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 of Christ's triumph over death is our openness to the pain of the world. For the sake of love, we join in the suffering of others. It is the path of new life, the resurrected life, which allows us to see the kingdom of God at work through empathy, justice, and a desire to minimize the pain and suffering of others.

Discuss: How does knowing that suffering is an essential aspect of the Christian faith impact how you view life?

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

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you be courageous and help someone who is hurting or suffering?

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. Each time you see one, be reminded of what it means.

Pray: **Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross to save me. Amen.**



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